



# ARTISANAL MINING AND PROPERTY RIGHTS UNDER THE STRENGTHENING TENURE AND RESOURCE RIGHTS II (STARR II) IDIQ PASTORALISM IN TRANSITION: EVOLVING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS BETWEEN LIVESTOCK HERDERS, FARMERS, AND MINERS IN SOUTH-WESTERN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



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Photo: Participatory mapping of traditional and clandestine transhumance routes with *ardos* and FNEC representatives, facilitated by an enumerator. Photo by: Peter Marsden with participants' consent.

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# ARTISANAL MINING AND PROPERTY RIGHTS TASK ORDER UNDER THE STRENGTHENING TENURE AND RESOURCE RIGHTS II (STARR II) IDIQ PASTORALISM IN TRANSITION: EVOLVING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS BETWEEN LIVESTOCK HERDERS, FARMERS, AND MINERS IN SOUTH-WESTERN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

3R	Return, Reclamation, Rehabilitation (Armed Group)
ACDA	Central Agency for Agricultural Development ( <i>Agence Centrafricaine de Développement Agricole</i> )
AMPR	Artisanal Mining and Property Rights
FACA	<i>Forces Armées Centrafricaines</i> (Central African Army)
FG	Focus Group
FNEC	<i>Fédération Nationale des Eleveurs</i> (National Federation of Livestock Producers)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IRAM	<i>Institute de Recherche et d'Applications des Méthodes de Développement</i> (Institute of Research and Development Application Methods)
KP	Kimberley Process
MINUSCA	<i>Mission de Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en Centrafrique</i> (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, the UN Peacekeeping Force in CAR)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UPC	<i>Unité pour la paix en Centrafrique</i> (Union for Peace in the Central African Republic) (Armed Group)
USAF	Anti-Fraud Special Unit
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

## I.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Artisanal Mining and Property Rights (AMPR) project in the Central African Republic (CAR) supports the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Land and Urban Office in improving land and resource governance and strengthening property rights for all members of society, especially women. It serves as USAID's vehicle for addressing complex land and resource issues around artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) in a multidisciplinary fashion. The project focuses primarily on diamond and, to a lesser extent, gold production in CAR, as well as targeted technical assistance to other USAID Missions and Operating Units in addressing land and resource governance issues within the ASM sector.

Ever since the early days of the Property Rights and Artisanal Diamond Development (PRADD I and II) projects, the issue of the role of various forms of livestock production in diamond mining areas of CAR has surfaced in the project sites in the southwest regions of the country. While participatory rural research carried out over the years has often highlighted the complex interactions between artisanal mining and livestock production, no in-depth analysis has examined the nuanced relationship that different groups of herders have with armed groups, artisanal diamond mining, and farming communities. This report is based primarily on survey instruments and summaries of quantitative data, supplemented by qualitative analysis through focus groups and semi-structured interviews, to assess the nature of the interactions among these three livelihood groups and whether the relations are symbiotic, hostile, or predatory.

The research agenda explored the mechanisms that exist locally to provide security and to manage conflict, and from this foundation, identified locally owned and realistic recommendations these livelihoods groups themselves proposed to promote peaceful collaboration with desired mutual benefits for all. For this reason, this summary of field results presents the voices of those often not heard, including women and nomadic pastoralists. It does so without making value judgments on the merit of their opinions, but to ensure they are considered in decision-making that affects their communities. The format for this report is somewhat different from more classical presentations. Evocative and direct quotes from respondents are peppered throughout this report as a way for the respondents themselves to narrate realities. Results from the analysis of data from questionnaires complement the quotations from local actors.

Definitional questions abound when referring to those raising livestock in the southwest. Ethnic groups known by the labels of Fulani, Peulh, FulBe, and Mbororo raise cattle and small ruminants and traverse the territory. It is often difficult to distinguish among labels used for herders such as "semi-settled," "semi-nomadic," "transhumant," and "foreign transhumants." This report uses the term "semi-settled" and not "semi-nomadic." The defining feature of this latter group of semi-settled livestock raisers is not their movement, but that the majority of the people (including most of the elderly, the women, and the children) have chosen to settle in one place. The settlement pattern matters for reasons of nationality, the sense of belonging to a place, and access to education and other public services, as limited as they might be in CAR. That said, populations of long-distance herders, referred here as "transhumant pastoralists," herd their livestock across national borders and often along seasonal tracks, or corridors, in search of pastures and water.

Case study sites were selected from across six sub-prefectures in the southwest prefectures of Sangha-Mbaéré and Mambéré-Kadéï. The sub-prefectures of Nola, Carnot, and Berberati are Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) compliant; Bayanga, Sosso-Nakombo, and Gamboula are not KPCS compliant, so diamonds extracted and sold from these places are viewed as conflict diamonds. The team conducted field research during the dry season from January through February 2020. The field research

team consulted with 834 people through high-level workshops, focus groups, and individual interviews. The research team spent much time in many rural communities, traveling by motorcycle where possible to villages and herder camps. The team often slept in the village or herder encampments as a way to gain trust and confidence from the respondents.

Southwestern CAR is crisscrossed by many commercial trade routes that support both farming and livestock production but also trading linkages with national and international markets. Sub-soil resources also consist of rich deposits of diamonds and gold, often located in and along the many rivers and streams of this tropical landscape. Historically, various types of symbiotic relationships have brought mutual benefits and social goods to farmers, herders, and miners through inter-community trade and mutually beneficial social interactions.

The southwest has long been characterized by instability as expressed through significant banditry and intercommunal violence. Armed groups have variously sought to provide security, protect their kin, or prey on the population. Ever since the 2012/2013 takeover of the country by the Seleka forces, local self-protection groups, called now the anti-Balaka armed groups, emerged in the southwest to respond to the predations and violence associated with the Seleka coalition. Over the years, other armed groups, called Siriri and 3R (Return, Reclamation, Rehabilitation) came into existence, ostensibly to defend herders from aggression from anti-Balaka. While this report does not go into these complex shifting alliances, suffice to note that complex webs of social and economic grievances characterize relations on all sides. The attached bibliography provides background literature on this subject.

There is clear evidence that, whether or not they supported 3R in the past, most herders are now preyed upon by 3R and do their best to avoid them. This includes semi-settled herders in CAR and foreign transhumants from Cameroon and Chad.

At the same time, a small minority of herders are more supportive of and openly reliant upon 3R; it is important for researchers to understand why that is.

During the 2012–2015 crisis, the semi-settled herders long living in CAR and those undertaking traditional cycles of seasonal transhumance between the north and the south of the country were displaced, but now are gradually returning. This presents many challenges, such as competition over pasture zones that were abandoned during the crisis, but up until the 1960s territories had been reserved by national law and administrative fiat for pastoralists. The field research carried out for this study concludes that the root cause of many contemporary conflicts in the southwest is the growing occupation of these pasture zones by those now using the land for farming, diamond and gold mining, and settlements. To compound this growing competition over resources, “new” transhumants—herders from other parts of the country, Chad, and Cameroon—are also keen to graze their livestock in these rich pastures and associated plentiful sources of water for livestock.

The findings from this field research suggest that a nuanced approach to conflict management in southwestern CAR is needed to respond to these complex social dynamics, themselves rooted in the environmental setting of rich pasturelands and plentiful water. Unfortunately, the southwest is characterized by many polarized reactions to perceived injustice and this has led to a wildly swinging pendulum of retribution by many parties to deep-seated conflicts. While there is much scope to kindle or renew mutually beneficial collaboration built on generations of interdependence, solutions must be locally owned. Outsiders, including government and donor agencies alike, must accept these realities in all their complexity.

The field research showed that at least 50 percent of the herder respondents report having been attacked by 3R, 15 percent by anti-Balaka groups, and 5 percent by unnamed armed groups in the 12 months prior to the research. At least 50 percent have been victims of cattle rustling and at least 25 percent have been taxed illegally by either an armed group or the authorities. The costs of these predations are high. As the local authorities in Carnot said, “When 3R arrive in the village, they tell communities, ‘Don’t be scared, we won’t hurt you; we’ve only come for the herders.’” The majority of

herders are caught in the middle of a difficult situation; they are preyed upon by 3R armed groups while also facing suspicions from artisanal miners and sedentary agricultural communities for being in collusion with the 3R.

The forms of predation are many, but the 3R requires herders to pay for protection against cattle theft. A herder with 100 head of cattle may have to pay as much as 150,000 XAF (\$260) and/or one or two cattle every couple of months to the 3R. Livestock raisers claim this is extortion and they try to vary their routes to try to avoid this payment to the 3R wherever possible, often at great personal cost. Yet when attacks from anti-Balaka and others occur on the herders, livestock raisers inform the 3R.

When livestock raisers are asked about the root causes of insecurity, more than 50 percent of all respondents cite the presence of armed groups as a factor; over 60 percent cite weak state presence, poverty, and porous borders as factors. Respondents suggest that the presence and status of armed groups is a symptom of these three factors, but not the principal cause. As a result of this perception of insecurity, several respondents called on an armed group if they deemed it necessary for their security, as they do not believe the state security forces can protect them. The field surveys indicated that 6 percent of farmers and 19 percent of artisanal miners admit reliance on anti-Balaka self-defense groups for security, and 5 percent of herders admit to relying on 3R for protection from anti-Balaka groups and other groups involved in banditry.

The 3R is a signatory to the Khartoum peace process and it portrays itself as the defender and protector of herders. The organization has sought to impose itself as the broker of disputes between farmers and herders, especially around the contentious issues of crops damaged by livestock and stolen cattle. The 3R has broken away from the Khartoum process, its leadership is fragmenting, and it remains a potent military threat to the *Mission de Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en Centrafrique* (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic [MINUSCA], the UN peacekeeping force) and the *Forces Armées Centrafricaines* (Central African Army [FACA]).

The 3R is not the only armed group situated in the southwest, nor are they the only ones preying on herders, artisanal miners, and farmers. Since the narratives surrounding each of these armed groups are so polarized and complex, it is best to step back and look at the situation more broadly. It seems that armed groups will seek to fill any vacuum created by an absence of trusted and competent state services and security forces. The field research suggests that rural communities facing predation from whatever source will search out protection from an armed group in situations where the state is unavailable or predatory; where mechanisms of conflict mediation and resolution are non-existent or biased; and where banditry, livestock theft, and other forms of extortion are rampant. Notwithstanding—or perhaps because of—all of these realities, a small minority of herders are more supportive of and openly reliant upon 3R, whether for protection or as part of criminal enterprises, including illegal diamond smuggling into Cameroon. While rumors abound that livestock herders are involved in extensive diamond smuggling, this does not appear to be widespread. Among the 800 people consulted during the field research, only three respondents admitted first-hand knowledge of herders engaging in the diamond trade with Cameroon. While there is evidence of what is likely diamond smuggling, there is no evidence that this occurs widely.

Most herders are not involved in the diamond trade and have no personal or commercial engagement with miners beyond limited sale of milk and meat. That includes most foreign transhumant pastoralists from both Cameroon and Chad. That said, a small minority of herders seem to be involved in the diamond trade. This includes some owners of large herds, who commission people to extract or procure diamonds for sale to traders in Cameroon.

Interventions which focus exclusively on armed groups and diamond smuggling give too much airtime to a mostly male criminal minority and fail to address the needs of women and others who are seeking to make their livelihood without recourse to violence.

Information gathering around an illegal activity like diamond smuggling is fraught with difficulties. While many artisanal diamond miners admit to selling diamonds for export to Cameroon, these same respondents note that this illegal diamond trade damages relations with their collector patrons. The study could not go into depth around this question, a complex set of issues addressed much more thoroughly by other studies carried out by the USAID AMPR project. That said, while it is clear that herders have capital that could be used to finance diamond trading, capital appears to be most frequently invested in reconstituting the livestock herds. Herders are trying to rebuild their herds that were severely diminished by predation in recent years. The price of livestock sold for meat in rural markets is very high, an indication of the scarcity of livestock. The reconstruction of herds is most likely a much higher priority for livestock raisers than entering into risky transactions around diamonds. That said, it appears that a minority of seasonal transhumance pastoralists may be financing what is probably the illegal mining and trade in diamonds.

Focusing excessively on the role of livestock raisers in the diamond trade feeds into the victim-narratives that fueled the 2012–2015 crisis, which fomented a coup and caused the flight of people, cattle, and capital from the region. The priority should be placed on recognizing the role that livestock herding brings to the rural and regional economies that, if taxed fairly and properly, would help

There is currently very little social integration between settled communities and semi-settled herders, and even less with transhumant herders. Well managed and peaceful transhumance needs to yield very visible benefits for all communities.

generate the state revenue needed to provide state services and security. Another vital issue is to focus on the plight of female herders, who suffer from minimal access to health care and other services. The decapitalization of the livestock herds in the southwest due to the years of predation is demonstrated by the field research data that showed that less than half of the farmers in the areas studied raise livestock and very few keep cattle. In effect, the field research suggests that terms of trade between farmers and livestock raisers are generally not equal. Farmers are more dependent on the sale of goods to herders than the purchase of goods from them. This indicates that capital flows from herders to farmers through unequal terms of exchange, but with cross-border transhumance pastoralism providing capital flow into CAR from neighboring countries.

The field research team concludes from the rich field observations that diversification of livelihoods and access to markets is critically important for the promotion of household resilience to economic shocks. Currently, many opportunities are being missed to strengthen trading relations between livestock herders and artisanal miners. From the perspective of peacebuilding in the conflict-ridden southwest, creating greater interdependence between different livelihood systems (a hallmark of the past symbiotic relations) would generate many peace dividends.

## **I.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE PEACEFUL RELATIONS FOR MUTUAL ECONOMIC BENEFIT**

As is expected from any intense field research period, several recommendations for policy and action emerged throughout the extensive discussions and interviews with the respondents. These recommendations represent the points of view of the respondents and are touched upon in greater detail in the body of this report. These are summarized and categorized below.

**Recommendations Addressed to the CAR National Government:** Provide clear guidance on local dispute resolution processes, including: an agreed tariff of damages awardable; a schedule of fees chargeable for arbitrating disputes; guidance on who are the appropriate authorities responsible for dealing with different criminal and civil grievances; and a whistleblowing mechanism to report corruption and other abuses of power.

Clear guidance is needed on the processes for registration of transhumant pastoralist herders, including the filing of route plans and appointment of a named person to inform the local and traditional authorities along that route, and the negotiation of arrangements for the arrival of herders. The government should put in place a clear and transparent system of taxation of herders, both semi-settled and transhumant, that specifies benefit distribution at the municipal, local, and village levels. The authorities could play a key role in setting up a collaborative decision-making body to determine the future status of the designated pasture zones, issuing bold and clear decisions about the status of structures that block the cattle corridors.

**Recommendations Addressed to Local and Traditional Authorities:** Engage in the swift resolution of outstanding cases of restitution of homes of livestock raisers occupied by others. Improve collaborative and community engagement in the management of the Dzanga-Sangha National Park, including compensation for farmers whose crops are destroyed by wild animals.

**Recommendations Addressed to the Security services of FACA, MINUSCA, and the Gendarmes:** Mount patrols along agreed migration routes, particularly at known flashpoints and border crossings, and to protect technical services.

**Recommendations Addressed to the *Fédération Nationale des Eleveurs* (National Federation of Livestock Producers [FNEC]) and Government Technical Services:** Put in place formalized dialogues between livestock herders and others to negotiate access to pastures and livestock migration corridors. Ensure low-cost access to technical services, including veterinary services, along livestock migration corridors and particularly at border crossings. Promote security-marking of cattle, whether by branding or by Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chips to establish ownership. Require abattoirs to verify ownership of livestock before purchase.

**Recommendations Addressed to International Organizations:** Promote training in mediation and arbitration techniques for traditional and local authorities, women, and young people. Provide training and support for livelihood diversification, including fisheries and veterinary services, while improving producer access to markets.

## 2.0 SOMMAIRE EXECUTIF

Le projet Droits de Propriété et Artisanat Minier (DPAM) en République centrafricaine (RCA) soutient le Bureau Foncier et Urbain de l'Agence des États-Unis pour le développement international (USAID) dans l'amélioration de la gouvernance des terres et des ressources et le renforcement des droits de propriété pour tous les membres de la société, en particulier les femmes. Il sert de véhicule à l'USAID pour traiter de manière multidisciplinaire les problèmes complexes des terres et des ressources liés à l'exploitation minière artisanale et à petite échelle (ASM). Le projet se concentre principalement sur la production de diamants et, dans une moindre mesure, d'or en RCA, et fournit une assistance technique ciblée à d'autres missions et unités opérationnelles de l'USAID pour résoudre les problèmes de gouvernance des terres et des ressources dans le secteur ASM.

Depuis les débuts des projets de Droits de Propriété et Développement du Diamant Artisanal (DPDDA I et II), la question du rôle des différentes formes de production animale dans les zones d'extraction de diamants a fait surface dans les sites de projets dans les régions du sud-ouest du pays. Alors que la recherche rurale participative menée au fil des ans a souvent mis en évidence les interactions complexes entre l'exploitation minière artisanale et la production animale, aucune analyse approfondie n'a examiné la relation nuancée que différents groupes d'éleveurs entretiennent avec les groupes armés, avec l'exploitation artisanale des diamants et avec les communautés agricoles. Ce rapport est basé principalement sur des instruments d'enquête et des résumés de données quantitatives, bien que d'autres méthodes mixtes aient été utilisées, pour évaluer la nature des interactions entre ces trois groupes de moyens de subsistance et si les relations sont symbiotiques, hostiles ou prédatrices.

Le programme de recherche a exploré les mécanismes qui existent au niveau local pour assurer la sécurité et gérer les conflits, et à partir de cette fondation, identifie des recommandations locales et réalistes que ces groupes eux-mêmes proposent pour promouvoir une collaboration pacifique avec l'espoir d'avantages mutuels pour tous. Pour cette raison, ce résumé des résultats de terrain présente les voix de ceux qui ne sont souvent pas entendus, y compris les femmes et les pasteurs nomades. Il le fait sans porter de jugement de valeur et en fonction de leurs opinions, et s'assure qu'ils sont pris en compte dans la prise de décision qui affecte leurs communautés. Le format de ce rapport est quelque peu différent des présentations plus classiques. Des citations évocatrices et directes des répondants sont parsemées tout au long de ce rapport afin que les répondants eux-mêmes racontent leurs réalités. Les résultats de l'analyse des données des questionnaires complètent les citations des acteurs locaux.

Les questions de définition abondent en ce qui concerne ceux qui élèvent du bétail dans le sud-ouest. Des groupes ethniques connus sous les appellations Fulani, Peulh, FulBe et Mbororo élèvent du bétail et des petits ruminants et traversent le territoire. Il est souvent difficile de faire la distinction entre les étiquettes utilisées pour les éleveurs telles que «semi-sédentarisé», «semi-nomade», «transhumant» et «transhumant étranger». Ce rapport utilise le terme «semi-sédentarisé» et non «semi-nomade». La caractéristique déterminante de ce dernier groupe d'éleveurs semi-sédentarisés n'est pas leur mouvement, mais le fait que la majorité des personnes, y compris la plupart des personnes âgées, les femmes et les enfants, ont choisi de s'installer au même endroit. Le modèle d'établissement est important pour des raisons de nationalité, de sentiment d'appartenance à un lieu et l'accès à l'éducation et à d'autres services publics, aussi limités qu'ils pourraient l'être en République centrafricaine. Cela dit, les populations d'éleveurs de longue distance, appelés ici «éleveurs transhumants», rassemblent leur bétail à travers les frontières nationales et souvent le long de pistes saisonnières, ou couloirs, à la recherche de pâturages et d'eau.

Des sites d'étude de cas ont été sélectionnés dans six sous-préfectures des préfectures sud-ouest de Sangha-Mbaéré et Mambéré-Kadéï. Les sous-préfectures de Nola, Carnot et Berberati sont conformes au système de certification du processus de Kimberley (KPCS); Bayanga, Sosso-Nakombo et Gamboula

ne sont pas conformes au KPCS, de sorte que les diamants extraits et vendus de ces endroits sont considérés comme des diamants de guerre. Des recherches sur le terrain ont été menées pendant la saison sèche de janvier à février 2020. L'équipe de recherche sur le terrain a consulté 834 personnes à travers des ateliers de haut niveau, des groupes de discussion et des entretiens individuels. L'équipe de recherche a passé beaucoup de temps dans de nombreuses communautés rurales, voyageant à moto lorsque cela était possible vers les villages et les camps d'éleveurs. L'équipe dormait souvent dans le village ou dans le campement des bergers afin de gagner la confiance des enquêtés.

Le sud-ouest de la RCA est sillonné par de nombreuses routes commerciales qui soutiennent à la fois l'agriculture et la production animale, mais également des liens commerciaux avec les marchés nationaux et internationaux. Les ressources du sous-sol sont également constituées de riches gisements de diamants et d'or, souvent situées dans et le long de nombreuses rivières et ruisseaux de ce paysage tropical. Historiquement, divers types de relations symbiotiques ont apporté des avantages mutuels et des biens sociaux aux agriculteurs, aux éleveurs et aux mineurs grâce au commerce intercommunautaire et aux interactions sociales mutuellement avantageuses.

Le sud-ouest a longtemps été caractérisé par une instabilité qui s'exprime par un banditisme important et une violence intercommunautaire. Les groupes armés ont diversement cherché à assurer la sécurité, à protéger leurs proches ou à s'attaquer à la population. Depuis la prise de contrôle du pays par les forces de la Séléka en 2012/2013, des groupes d'autoprotection locaux, appelés désormais les groupes armés anti-Balaka, sont apparus dans le sud-ouest pour répondre aux prédateurs et à la violence associées à la coalition de la Séléka. Au fil des ans, d'autres groupes armés, appelés Siriri et 3R (Retour, Réclamation, Réhabilitation) ont vu le jour, apparemment pour défendre les éleveurs de l'agression des anti-Balaka. Bien que ce rapport n'aborde pas ces alliances complexes et changeantes, il suffit de noter que des réseaux complexes de griefs sociaux et économiques caractérisent les relations de toutes parts. La bibliographie ci-jointe fournit une documentation de base sur ce sujet.

Il y a des preuves claires que, qu'ils aient ou non soutenu 3R dans le passé, la plupart des éleveurs sont désormais la proie de 3R et font de leur mieux pour les éviter. Cela comprend les éleveurs semi-sédentarisés en RCA et les transhumants étrangers du Cameroun et du Tchad.

En même temps, une petite minorité d'éleveurs est plus favorable et ouvertement tributaire des 3R, et il est important de comprendre pourquoi.

Au cours de la crise de 2012-2015, les éleveurs semi-sédentarisés vivant depuis longtemps en RCA et ceux qui entreprenaient des cycles traditionnels de transhumance saisonnière entre le nord et le sud du pays ont été déplacés, mais ils reviennent progressivement. Cela présente de nombreux défis, et parmi eux, la concurrence sur les zones de pâturage abandonnées pendant la crise, mais qui dans le passé étaient réservées aux éleveurs par la loi nationale et les décisions administratives des années 1960. La recherche sur le terrain effectuée pour cette étude conclut que la cause profonde de nombreux conflits contemporains dans le sud-ouest est l'occupation croissante de ces zones de pâturage par ceux qui utilisent maintenant la terre pour l'agriculture, l'extraction de diamants et d'or et les colonies. Pour aggraver cette concurrence croissante pour les ressources, les «nouveaux» transhumants, les éleveurs d'autres régions du pays et les voisins de la RCA au Tchad et au Cameroun, sont également désireux de faire paître leur bétail dans ces riches pâturages et les abondantes sources d'eau pour le bétail.

Les résultats de cette recherche sur le terrain suggèrent qu'une approche nuancée de la gestion des conflits dans le sud-ouest de la RCA est nécessaire pour répondre à ces dynamiques sociales complexes, elles-mêmes ancrées dans l'environnement de riches pâturages et d'abondantes eaux. Malheureusement, le sud-ouest est caractérisé par de nombreuses réactions polarisées face à l'injustice perçue, ce qui a conduit à d'importantes représailles de la part de nombreuses parties à des conflits profonds. Bien qu'il existe de nombreuses possibilités de susciter ou de renouveler une collaboration mutuellement bénéfique fondée sur des générations d'interdépendance, les solutions doivent être prises en charge

localement. Les étrangers, comme le gouvernement et les bailleurs de fonds, doivent accepter ces réalités dans toute leur complexité.

La recherche sur le terrain a montré qu'au cours des 12 derniers mois, au moins la moitié des éleveurs interrogés déclarent avoir été attaqués par 3R, 15% par des groupes anti-Balaka et 5% par des groupes armés non identifiés. Au moins la moitié ont été victimes de vol de bétail et au moins un quart ont été taxés illégalement soit par un groupe armé, soit par les autorités. Les coûts de ces prédatons sont élevés. Comme l'ont dit les autorités locales de Carnot; «Lorsque les 3R arrivent dans le village, ils disent aux communautés:« N'ayez pas peur, nous ne vous ferons pas de mal; nous ne venons que pour les éleveurs. »La majorité des éleveurs sont pris au milieu d'une situation difficile; ils sont la proie des groupes armés 3R d'une part, mais d'autre part, ils sont soupçonnés par des mineurs artisanaux et des communautés agricoles sédentaires pour être en collusion avec les 3R!

Les formes de prédation sont nombreuses, mais le 3R oblige les éleveurs à payer pour se protéger contre le vol de bétail. Un éleveur de 100 têtes de bétail peut devoir payer jusqu'à 150 000 XAF (260 \$) et / ou un ou deux bovins tous les deux mois au 3R. Les éleveurs prétendent qu'il s'agit d'extorsion et ils essaient de varier leurs itinéraires pour essayer d'éviter ce paiement aux 3R dans la mesure du possible, souvent à un coût personnel élevé. Pourtant, lorsque des attaques des anti-Balaka et d'autres se produisent sur les éleveurs, ils en informent les 3R.

Lorsque les éleveurs sont interrogés sur les causes profondes de l'insécurité, plus de la moitié de tous les répondants citent la présence de groupes armés comme un facteur, mais plus de 60% citent notamment la faible présence de l'État, la pauvreté et la porosité des frontières. Les personnes interrogées suggèrent que la présence et le statut des groupes armés sont un symptôme de ces trois facteurs, mais pas la cause principale. En raison de cette perception d'insécurité, plusieurs répondants ont fait appel à un groupe armé s'ils le jugent nécessaire pour leur sécurité car ils ne croient pas que les forces de sécurité de l'État peuvent les protéger. Les enquêtes sur le terrain ont indiqué que 6% des agriculteurs et 19% des mineurs artisanaux admettent compter sur les groupes d'autodéfense anti-Balaka pour la sécurité, et 5% des éleveurs admettent compter sur 3R pour se protéger des groupes anti-Balaka et d'autres groupes impliqués dans le banditisme.

Le 3R est signataire du processus de paix de Khartoum et se présente comme le défenseur et le protecteur des éleveurs. L'organisation a cherché à s'imposer comme le courtier des conflits entre agriculteurs et éleveurs et notamment autour des questions litigieuses des récoltes endommagées par le bétail et du bétail volé. Au moment de la soumission de ce rapport, les 3R ont rompu avec le processus de Khartoum, son leadership se fragmente et il est en combat militaire avec la force de maintien de la paix des Nations Unies, la MINUSCA.

Les 3R ne sont pas le seul groupe armé situé dans le sud-ouest et ils ne sont pas les seuls à s'attaquer aux éleveurs, aux mineurs artisanaux et aux agriculteurs. Étant donné que les récits entourant chacun de ces groupes armés sont si polarisés et complexes, il vaut mieux prendre du recul et regarder la situation plus largement. Il semble que les groupes armés chercheront à combler tout vide créé par l'absence de services d'État et de forces de sécurité fiables et compétents. La recherche sur le terrain suggère que les communautés rurales confrontées à la prédation, quelle qu'en soit la source, chercheront à se protéger d'un groupe armé dans des situations où l'État est indisponible ou prédateur, où les mécanismes de médiation et de résolution des conflits sont inexistantes ou biaisés, et où le banditisme, le vol de bétail, et d'autres formes d'extorsion sont monnaie

La plupart des éleveurs ne sont pas impliqués dans le commerce des diamants et n'ont aucun engagement personnel ou commercial avec les mineurs au-delà de la vente limitée de lait et de viande. Cela inclut la plupart des éleveurs transhumants étrangers du Cameroun et du Tchad. En même temps, une petite minorité d'éleveurs semble être impliquée dans le commerce des diamants. Cela inclut certains propriétaires de grands troupeaux, qui chargent leur peuple d'extraire ou d'acheter des diamants pour les vendre aux commerçants au Cameroun.

courante. Néanmoins, ou peut-être à cause de toutes ces réalités, une petite minorité d'éleveurs est plus favorable et ouvertement dépendante des 3R, que ce soit pour la protection ou dans le cadre d'entreprises criminelles, y compris la contrebande illégale de diamants au Cameroun. Alors que les rumeurs abondent selon lesquelles les éleveurs sont impliqués dans une vaste contrebande de diamants, cela semble être un mythe. Parmi les 800 personnes consultées lors de l'enquête sur le terrain, seules trois personnes ont admis avoir connaissance de première main des éleveurs engagés dans le commerce des diamants avec le Cameroun. Bien qu'il existe des preuves de ce qui est vraisemblablement de la contrebande de diamants, rien ne prouve que cela se produit largement.

La collecte d'informations autour d'une activité illégale comme la contrebande de diamants est semée d'embûches. Alors que de nombreux mineurs artisanaux de diamants admettent vendre des diamants pour l'exportation vers le Cameroun, ces mêmes répondants notent que le commerce des diamants nuit aux relations avec leurs mécènes collectionneurs. L'étude n'a pas pu approfondir cette question, un ensemble complexe de questions traitées de manière beaucoup plus approfondie par d'autres études menées par le projet AMPR de l'USAID. Cela dit, il est clair que les éleveurs disposent de capitaux qui pourraient être utilisés pour financer le commerce de diamants, mais il semble que pour l'essentiel, les capitaux soient investis dans la reconstitution des troupeaux. Les éleveurs tentent de reconstituer leurs troupeaux qui ont été gravement diminués par la prédation ces dernières années. Le prix du bétail vendu pour la viande sur les marchés ruraux est très élevé au grand dam des bouchers, signe de la rareté du bétail. La reconstruction des troupeaux est probablement une priorité beaucoup plus élevée pour les éleveurs que la conclusion de transactions risquées autour des diamants. Cela dit, il semble que certains éleveurs saisonniers de transhumance financent ce qui est probablement l'exploitation minière illégale et le commerce des diamants, mais c'est une minorité.

Les interventions qui se concentrent exclusivement sur les groupes armés et la contrebande de diamants donnent trop de temps d'attente à une minorité criminelle majoritairement masculine et ne répondent pas aux besoins des femmes et d'autres personnes qui cherchent à gagner leur vie sans recourir à la violence.

En accordant une attention excessive au rôle des éleveurs de bétail dans le commerce des diamants, cela alimente les récits de victimes qui ont nourri la crise de 2012-2015, qui a fomenté un coup d'État et provoqué la fuite de personnes, de bétail et de capitaux de la région. La priorité devrait être accordée à la reconnaissance du rôle que l'élevage de bétail apporte aux économies rurales et régionales et, s'il est imposé de manière juste et approprié, il contribuerait à générer les recettes publiques nécessaires pour fournir les services et la sécurité de l'État. Une question beaucoup plus importante est de se concentrer sur le sort des femmes éleveuses, les femmes qui souffrent d'un accès minimal aux soins de santé et à d'autres services. La décapitalisation des troupeaux de bétail dans le sud-ouest en raison des années de prédation est démontrée par les données de recherche sur le terrain qui ont montré que moins de la moitié des agriculteurs des zones étudiées élèvent du bétail et très peu élèvent du bétail. En effet, la recherche sur le terrain suggère que les termes de l'échange entre les agriculteurs et les éleveurs ne sont généralement pas égaux. Les agriculteurs sont plus dépendants de la vente de biens aux éleveurs que de leur achat. Cela indique que les capitaux circulent des éleveurs aux agriculteurs à travers des conditions d'échange inégales, mais avec un pastoralisme transhumant transfrontalier fournissant des flux de capitaux en RCA depuis les pays voisins.

Il y a actuellement très peu d'intégration sociale entre les communautés sédentaires et les éleveurs semi-sédentarisés, et encore moins avec les éleveurs transhumants. Une transhumance bien gérée et pacifique doit produire des avantages très visibles pour toutes les communautés.

L'équipe de recherche sur le terrain conclut à partir des riches observations de terrain que la diversification des moyens de subsistance et l'accès aux marchés sont d'une importance cruciale pour la promotion de la résilience des ménages aux chocs économiques. Actuellement, de nombreuses opportunités sont ratées pour renforcer les relations commerciales entre les éleveurs et les mineurs

artisans. Du seul point de vue de la consolidation de la paix dans le sud-ouest ravagé par les conflits, créer une plus grande interdépendance entre les différents systèmes de moyens d'existence, caractéristique des relations symbiotiques passées, générerait de nombreux dividendes de la paix.

## **2.1 RECOMMANDATIONS POUR PROMOUVOIR DES RELATIONS PACIFIQUES POUR UN BÉNÉFICE ÉCONOMIQUE MUTUEL**

Comme attendu de toute période de recherche intense sur le terrain, plusieurs recommandations de politique et d'action ont émergé au cours des discussions et des entretiens approfondis avec les répondants. Ces recommandations représentent les points de vue des répondants et sont abordées plus en détail dans le corps de ce rapport. Celles-ci sont résumées et classées ci-dessous.

**Recommandations adressées au gouvernement national de la RCA :** Fournir des orientations claires sur les processus locaux de règlement des différends, y compris un tarif convenu des dommages-intérêts attribuables ; un barème des honoraires exigibles pour l'arbitrage des différends; des conseils sur les autorités compétentes chargées de traiter les différentes plaintes pénales et civiles; et un mécanisme d'alerte pour signaler la corruption et les autres abus de pouvoir.

Des directives claires sont nécessaires sur les processus d'enregistrement des éleveurs transhumants, y compris le dépôt des plans de route et la nomination d'une personne désignée pour informer les autorités locales et traditionnelles le long de cette route, et la négociation des arrangements pour l'arrivée des éleveurs. Le gouvernement devrait mettre en place un système clair et transparent d'imposition des éleveurs, à la fois semi-sédentarisés et transhumants, et qui spécifie la répartition des bénéfices aux niveaux municipal, local et villageois. Les autorités pourraient jouer un rôle clé dans la mise en place d'un organe décisionnel collaboratif pour déterminer le statut futur des zones de pâturage désignées, en émettant des décisions audacieuses et claires sur le statut des structures qui bloquent les couloirs du bétail.

**Recommandations adressées aux autorités locales et traditionnelles :** S'engager dans la résolution rapide des cas en suspens de restitution de maisons d'éleveurs de bétail occupées par d'autres. Améliorer l'engagement collaboratif et communautaire dans la gestion du parc national de Dzanga-Sangha, y compris l'indemnisation des agriculteurs dont les cultures sont détruites par les animaux sauvages.

**Recommandations adressées aux services de sécurité des FACA, de la MINUSCA et des gendarmes:** Monter des patrouilles le long des itinéraires de migration convenus, en particulier aux foyers connus, aux passages frontaliers et pour protéger les services techniques.

**Recommandations adressées à la Fédération nationale des éleveurs (FNEC) et aux services techniques du gouvernement:** Mettre en place des dialogues formalisés entre les éleveurs et autres pour négocier l'accès aux pâturages et aux couloirs de migration du bétail; assurer un accès à faible coût aux services techniques, y compris les services vétérinaires, le long des couloirs de migration du bétail et en particulier aux points de passage des frontières.

Promouvoir le marquage de sécurité des bovins, que ce soit par leur marque ou par des puces d'identification par radiofréquence (RFID) pour en établir la propriété; exiger des abattoirs qu'ils vérifient la propriété du bétail avant l'achat.

**Recommandations adressées aux organisations internationales:** Promouvoir une formation aux techniques de médiation et d'arbitrage pour les autorités traditionnelles et locales, les femmes et les jeunes. Fournir une formation et un soutien pour la diversification des moyens de subsistance, y compris la pêche et les services vétérinaires, tout en améliorant l'accès des producteurs aux marchés.

## 3.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives defined by the USAID AMPR project were extensively debated in late 2019 within the project, but also with government authorities in Bangui and the regions. These were further debated during workshops in early January 2020.

#### Field Research Objectives

1. Describe the nuanced relationships that different groups of herders have with armed groups, artisanal diamond mining operations, and farming communities, assessing the extent to which each is symbiotic, hostile, or predatory.
2. Draw data from case study sites selected from across six sub-prefectures of the Sangha-Mbaéré and Mambéré-Kadéï prefectures in southwest CAR. The sub-prefectures of Nola, Carnot, and Berberati are Kimberley Process-compliant; Bayanga, Sosso-Nakombo, and Gamboula are not Kimberley Process-compliant.
3. Chart the changing patterns of herding in the zone over the past decade, including different livestock owners and herders working in the zone, changing routes and herding practices, and challenges herders face.
4. Map places and causes of conflict within each group and sub-group.
5. Assess confidence in different mechanisms and different actors for providing security and managing conflict.
6. Obtain datasets for interview questions that can be disaggregated by place, ethnicity, livelihood, age, or gender, and which include both the majority, minority, and outlier views.
7. Identify locally owned and workable recommendations for future peaceful collaboration that will mutually benefit all groups.

### 3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.2.1 THE RESEARCH TEAM AND TIMETABLE

**Lead Researcher:** Patrice Mathiam

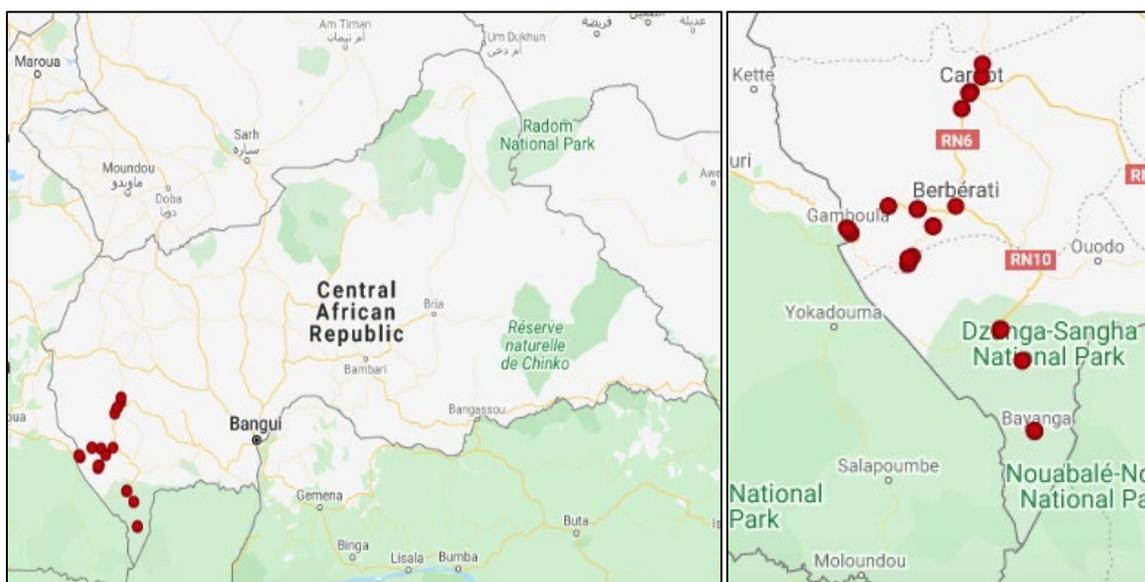
**Enumerators:** Donald Martial Koe Miabe, Jeanne Remanta Renata, Jean-Oscar Ganaye, and Honoré Toqui-Vicko

6–11 January: High-level delegation to Berberati and Nola, negotiate access, meet key stakeholders, and facilitate workshops hosted by the AMPR team.

13–22 January: Hold workshops with key stakeholders in Bangui; plan the research questionnaire and focus group (FG) discussion points with the research team.

23–end of February: Conduct research mission to the case study sites in six sub-prefectures of Nola, Carnot, Berberati, Bayanga, Sosso-Nakombo, and Gamboula.

## Map I: Location of Interview Sites



Research areas.

Map prepared by Ana Moens from Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (<http://www.hdptcar.net/>)

The research team conducted structured and unstructured interviews and FGs with members of each livelihood group, and utilized data from round-table groups in AMPR-hosted workshops.

The research team carried out structured, one-on-one interviews using fixed questionnaires of closed questions that were tailored to each group. Additionally, the team used unstructured interviews, which they conducted through single-identity FGs and informal discussions with more probing, open questions. To triangulate results and create maps of conflict points and routes used for seasonal transhumance, the team used participatory mapping.

The research team spent time in the villages, traveling by motorcycles where possible and sleeping in herder camps.

This enabled conversations to evolve in an unstructured manner; the team members were able to earn trust and explore subjects in greater depth and nuance, beyond the superficial narratives. It was important to mix informal interview techniques with the more structured research methodology, which is why a greater proportion of the consultation with transhumant herders is via FGs rather than formal interviews.



Photo 1: An enumerator with a semi-settled herder at his camp in Beya. Photo by Concordis.

### 3.2.2 CASE STUDY SITES

Case study sites were selected from across six sub-prefectures in the southwest CAR, in the prefectures of Sangha-Mbaéré and Mambéré-Kadéï. The sub-prefectures of Nola, Carnot, and Berberati are KPCS compliant; Bayanga, Sosso-Nakombo, and Gamboula are not KPCS compliant. Sites were

selected as being representative of the varied and complex dynamics that exist among and between herders, farmers, miners, and armed groups in the sub-region.

The research team planned to go to the sub-prefectures of Amada Gaza and Gadzi, both in the Mambéré-Kadéï prefecture. This part of the mission had to be aborted due to the high-security risks.

### 3.2.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA

The research team conducted 216 individual interviews with 116 men and 100 women across Berberati, Bayanga, Nola, Sosso-Nakombo, Gamboula, and Carnot. At the outset of each interview, the team informed participants of the reason for the questions and asked if participants agreed to be interviewed.

Questionnaires produced a quantitative dataset, seeking to understand and measure perceptions of different members of each livelihood group around several themes. These themes had been developed and tested for local relevance following the high-level workshops with 138 community leaders and local authorities in Nola, Berberati, and Bangui in January 2020, then refined with the enumerators. The team collected detailed information through a mixture of multiple-choice questions and written answers. Although the answers to questions were recorded in a multiple-choice format for speed and consistency, respondents were not shown the possible answers, to avoid leading them in any way. When they gave an answer that was not available, this was typed in separately. Respondents were asked how they self-identify and how they make their livelihood, enabling the dataset to be disaggregated by such factors as age, gender, ethnicity, and religion. This also helped the research team to understand the extent to which people undertake a range of different livelihood options concurrently.

The research team uploaded questionnaires onto smartphones in French and Sango using the Fulcrum data collection application. This enabled pre-prepared but bespoke questions to be asked one-on-one to each respondent, only asking relevant questions that correspond to answers already given. It also enabled people who identify with several different livelihoods to be asked questions about each one. For example, those identifying as miners were automatically asked questions about mining, as well as questions about their interaction with herders and with farmers. Those who identify as farmers were asked about their crops and livestock. Herders were asked about their *zone d'attache* (place of habitual residence), past and present migration routes, and relationships between transhumant and semi-settled herders. The enumerators were trained to select representative samples of respondents from each of the livelihood groups, as well as in explaining why the consultation is important and the different ways in which confidentiality will be respected.

### 3.2.4 QUALITATIVE DATA

The research team conducted 52 focus groups across the six sub-prefectures, consulting 480 different people. FGs and unstructured interviews produced a qualitative dataset for each livelihood group, exploring lines of causation and providing greater depth and detail to the analysis by asking who, when, what, why, and how. The enumerators, trained and experienced in promoting discussion among participants, followed guidelines of pre-prepared questions and discussion-starters, which encouraged participants to challenge assumptions and move beyond simplistic rhetoric to explore more deeply the underlying issues, their perceptions, their hopes for the future, and their recommendations about how to achieve those aspirations.

Each FG comprised between two and twenty participants with an ideal target of ten to twelve. FGs were facilitated by at least two enumerators, one to ask questions and facilitate discussion, the other to take detailed notes. The team endeavored to make FGs homogenous by age, gender, and profession; this was not always possible as discussions took place in public settings where people were often interested to join in and keen to let the team know their opinions.

The team used various tools to improve the depth and inclusivity of consultations and to give voice to those who might otherwise have been excluded. This included mapping and modeling, narrative storytelling, and guided debate between participants. This meant sometimes having quiet, side-bar FGs with women or young people whilst the “main” consultation was underway on the other side of the village, as well as consulting directly with women’s cooperatives and youth groups.

Participative mapping was used to triangulate answers given by other respondents about the personalities and issues involved, including migration routes and flashpoints for conflict.

### 3.2.5 DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

The research team consulted 834 people through 216 individual interviews, 480 people in 52 focus groups, and 138 community leaders and local authorities in workshops Nola, Berberati, and Bangui. Research locations were selected as being representative of the demographic, pastoral, agricultural, or mining importance in the sub-prefecture, and of the trading and conflict dynamics.

Data were also collected from administrative and traditional authorities and, in Bayanga, from the forest rangers in the Special Reserve of Dzanga-Sangha. This is an area classified by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a world heritage site and supported by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

**Table 1: Questionnaires Administered**

Livelihood Category	Number of Men	Number of Women	Total
Farmers	50	68	118
Herders	39	3	42
Artisanal miners	12	6	18
Teachers	1	0	1
Butchers	3	0	3
Agropastoralist farmers	0	1	1
Traders	2	17	19
Housekeepers	0	3	3
Fisher(wo)men	0	1	1
Civil servants	2	1	3
Mechanics	2	0	2
Other	6	0	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>217</b>

**Table 2: Focus Group Interviews**

Livelihood Category	Number of Men	Number of Women	Total
Farmers	59	118	177
Herders	104	12	116
Artisanal miners	58	0	58
Authorities (local and municipal)	34	0	34
Butchers	16	1	17
Youth leaders	32	6	38
Forest rangers	15	0	15
FNEC	13	0	13
Diamond/gold collectors	12	0	12
<b>Totals</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>480</b>

**Table 3: Total Number of Consultations**

<b>Livelihood Category</b>	<b>Number of Men</b>	<b>Number of Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Farmers</b>	109	186	295
<b>Herders</b>	143	15	158
<b>Artisanal miners</b>	70	6	76
<b>Authorities (local and municipal)</b>	34	0	34
<b>Youth leaders</b>	32	6	38
<b>Other livelihood categories</b>	72	24	96
<b>Final Totals</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>697</b>

## 4.0 EVOLUTION OF HERDING PATTERNS

### 4.1 CONTEXT

The southwest of the Central African Republic is a region in which arable farming, pastoral farming, and diamond and gold mining have coexisted for about 100 years, with the commencement of commercial diamond extraction and the arrival of Mbororo Fulani herders in the 1920s (Boutrais, 2001; Bonnet et al., 2017).

There was an attempt to reduce conflict in the 1960s by segregating the land, creating administrative districts or communes (*communes d'élevage*) in which only pastoralism is permitted (Bonnet et al., 2017). There is debate about whether this zonation is still fit for purpose—or indeed whether it has ever been fully respected. In the past, relations between herders and farmers were more interdependent as seen through significant interactions among livelihood groups, with sharing of labor, mutual trade, renting out oxen for plowing, grazing cattle on fallow lands and crop stubble, and manuring crop lands.

Ongoing banditry (known commonly as the *zarguina* phenomenon [Seignobos, 2011a]) led to the setting up of self-protection groups to protect local communities. The narrative soliciting support for the coup d'état against President François Bozizé was around policies perceived as discriminatory against Muslim people and regions. The Seleka, or the coalition of groups leading the coup, were perceived to target Christian ethnic groups as well as government institutions. The southwest suffered greatly in these attacks.

In response, settled communities' self-defense groups morphed into the anti-Balaka armed group. After initially targeting Seleka groups, the anti-Balaka then turned their attacks towards the wider Muslim community, claiming they must have supported or enabled Seleka attacks. This resulted in a large-scale flight from the area by Muslim groups, including most Peulh herders, traders, and diamond collectors, which had a significant impact on livestock movements and trade (FAO, 2015; Schouten and Kalessopo, 2019). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) figures showed at the time that 540,000 people were driven out of the country with another 690,000 internally displaced.

Since then, CAR has seen the emergence of several armed groups that have divided, merged, or taken one another over. The Siriri armed force was created with a rationale of protecting herders from anti-Balaka groups. 3R was formed with similar objectives in the northwest of the country and has shown increasing presence in this sub-region in recent years, largely eclipsing Siriri.

In 2015, a new form of herding emerged (mostly originating in Chad) in which very large herds came into the area, herded and protected by well-armed and militarized young men. These herds, reputed to be owned by very wealthy individuals and families, took advantage of the pasturage vacated in western CAR.

Semi-settled herders displaced to Cameroon during the crisis have started to return, albeit slowly and cautiously, often without their original livestock. In the intervening years, some of their houses and shops have been occupied and much of the land previously given over to grazing has been put to farming or artisanal mining (Bonnet et al., 2017). Seasonal transhumance from Cameroon has resumed and has commenced with smaller herds of cattle from Chad.

Returning herders have faced some opposition, particularly those seen as “foreign transhumants.” Some respondents feared that the returning herders would bring armed groups with them to cause harm. Others in the settled community have a vested interest in continuing to occupy newly acquired houses and land, including the zones traditionally assigned to pastoralism. Coupled with this are also the usual tensions between farmers and herders over crop destruction by livestock.

The question is being raised by Central African policy makers about whether now is the time to redraw the maps that segregate land into pastoralist reserve areas and transhumant corridors. Spatial allocation of land into different uses by livelihoods groups might resolve the essence of land tenure conflicts over overlapping land uses. Regardless of where in the world it is implemented, land reform is sensitive and challenging; this would need to be undertaken with extreme care in this delicate context of genuine fear, poor social cohesion, and politicized vested interests. Many of those displaced have yet to return, and there are also “new” herders keen to make use of this pasturage, whether from Cameroon, Chad, or elsewhere, particularly during the dry season. Several armed groups are visibly present who, to varying degrees, provide self-protection to certain sectors of the population and/or predate on them for material gain.

## **4.2 LIVESTOCK OWNERSHIP AND HERDERS**

The research team consulted 158 herders across the regions, conducting 42 individual interviews and meeting another 116 herders in FGs. Those consulted were a mixture of owners of the livestock, co-owners with family members, and shepherds moving livestock belonging to others. They generally traveled with family or clan members.

Many semi-settled herders from CAR lost most or all of their cattle during the 2012–2015 crisis. While a few stayed in CAR, most fled and incurred further losses in Cameroon. Some retain a few of their cattle, but many now work as shepherds for livestock owners based in Cameroon or Chad, for which they are paid 30–50,000 XAF (US\$50–85) each month by the owner. They hope to use this money to eventually reconstitute herds and resume their original activities, regaining their agency and autonomy.

These returnees are returning slowly, cautious about security, and are trying to rebuild their herds. Median herd sizes have decreased markedly since the crisis—there are some large herds, but most have fewer than 50 head of cattle, which are owned or co-owned by family units. Some livestock owners also practice farming: answers to the questionnaires indicate that 20 percent of those consulted also farm, mostly growing manioc, with some growing peanuts, maize, and/or beans.

Seasonal transhumance from Cameroon is restarting and now includes “new” transhumants traveling into Gamboula alongside those recognized by the local population. Some transhumants from Cameroon are increasingly choosing to settle in CAR instead of migrating seasonally. Chadian transhumant herders interviewed are moving livestock owned by their families, spending the dry season in this region and the wet season in the north; some would like to settle in CAR if the security situation would permit.

## **4.3 ETHNIC ORIGINS OF PASTORALIST GROUPS**

Monitoring herding patterns is difficult. The country is vast; many herders prefer to stay away from towns and villages and will flee if approached. Settled communities often refer to herding groups by labels such as Fulani, Peulh, FulBe, or Mbororo, among others, which often differ from the ways herders identify themselves (Luizza, 2019).

There is pride among some Peulh groups that they are “genuine” nomads and so do not have a *zone d’attache*, or habitual place of residence. Following the crisis, many herders are gradually returning, sending out advance envoys to assess the lay of the land. Returning herders are undertaking seasonal transhumance and are often unaccompanied by their families, but have the intention of settling in CAR with their families if they can find housing and if security permits.

This report uses the term “semi-settled” and not “semi-nomadic” pastoralists, or livestock raisers. The defining feature of this group is not their movement, but the fact that the majority of the community—including most of the elderly, the women, and the children—have chosen to settle in one place. This is significant in terms of nationality, the sense of belonging, and access to public services such as education

or health care. Within this grouping, the research team distinguished several different “profiles” of herders, as displayed in the demographics of FG participants and the descriptions participants gave of themselves.

### 4.3.1 SEMI-SETTLED GROUPS

Although a few semi-settled Central African herders stayed throughout the 2012–2015 crisis, most were forcibly displaced to Cameroon and have slowly started to return<sup>1</sup> over the last two or three years. Many of them now work as shepherds for cattle owners based in Cameroon, having lost their livestock, although some retain a remnant of their original herd (seen in Sosso-Nakombo, Sola).

Many of these returnees supplement their herding income with farming activities (as seen in Beya, Sosso-Nakombo, Gamboula, Toutoubou). For example, one group said they use the money they receive for shepherding to buy sheep, which they sell for profit during the “Tabaski” festival. They plan to use this money to buy their cattle (FG with four semi-settled returnee herders working as shepherds in Beya).

### 4.3.2 TRANSHUMANT PASTORALISTS

Historic seasonal transhumance occurs from Cameroon into CAR, where there is better grazing land. These herders were forced to remain in Cameroon during the crisis, but the transhumance has slowly resumed and some are beginning to become semi-settled in CAR. This includes former livestock owners who now work as shepherds (Bobangué, Beya, Boudalé). Transhumant herders from Cameroon who own their cattle have recommenced their traditional cross-border seasonal migration as observed in Sosso-Nakombo. Transhumance pastoralism also originates in Chad, with herders pressing further south each year. While difficult to measure at this time, the southward movement of Chadian herds is mostly remarked upon in Carnot.

### 4.3.3 PASTORALIST ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION

The research team identified many different groups of Peulh. For example, the Peulh groups in Carnot identify themselves as Aku and Djafoun. Among these Peulh, some of the owners stayed in CAR during the crisis but sent their herds to Cameroon, and through this preserved some of their cattle. Cattle herds are small and consist only of about 10–20 head of cattle which are grouped for protection.

Foreign transhumance in the Carnot environs includes Peuhl Hanagamba from Chad. Some lost their livestock and were forced into Cameroon during the crisis (Yerima Badock, Carnot). Among those interviewed was a family who came to Carnot for the first time in 2020, but would like to settle down there if the security situation permits (Dobélé and Carnot).

In Gamboula are Peulh groups from Cameroon, including Daneji, Akou, and Djafoun. These groups would like to settle down in CAR if the security allows; if not, they will continue with the seasonal migration. A group of Peulh Akou and Danedji transhumants fled Siriri and came to Gamboula. When 3R started occupying the cattle corridors, they abandoned the official corridors and found themselves in farmers’ fields. For this reason, the local population do not recognize them, call them “new transhumants,” and are suspicious of them.

In Sosso-Nakombo are the Peulh Oudah, Bodado, and Djafoun groups. The Oudah came back after the crisis, but are believed to have moved away from Bria and Bambari, fleeing the *Unité pour la paix en*

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<sup>1</sup> 28 of the 42 herders (67 percent) consulted through individual questionnaires said they are returnees.

*Centrafrique* (Union for Peace in the Central African Republic [UPC]) armed group. Foreign transhumants in this region are Peuhl Djafoun, who originate from Cameroon and travel seasonally.

In Beya, the Peulh come from the sub-groups of Djafoun, Ouidarbe, and Akou. They were originally CAR citizens and came back from Cameroon after the crisis. Most lost all their herds and they currently work as herders hired by owners who live in Cameroon. Foreign transhumance in this region is by Peuhl Akou and Radi from Cameroon.

#### 4.4 PASTORALIST TRANSHUMANCE ROUTES

Nomadic herders traveling into the sub-region from Cameroon cross the Mboumbé River on the Cameroon/CAR border. Historically, herders traveling from Cameroon (on the official, red route noted in Map 2, next page) have stayed around Gamboula or moved on through Berberati and south to Nola.

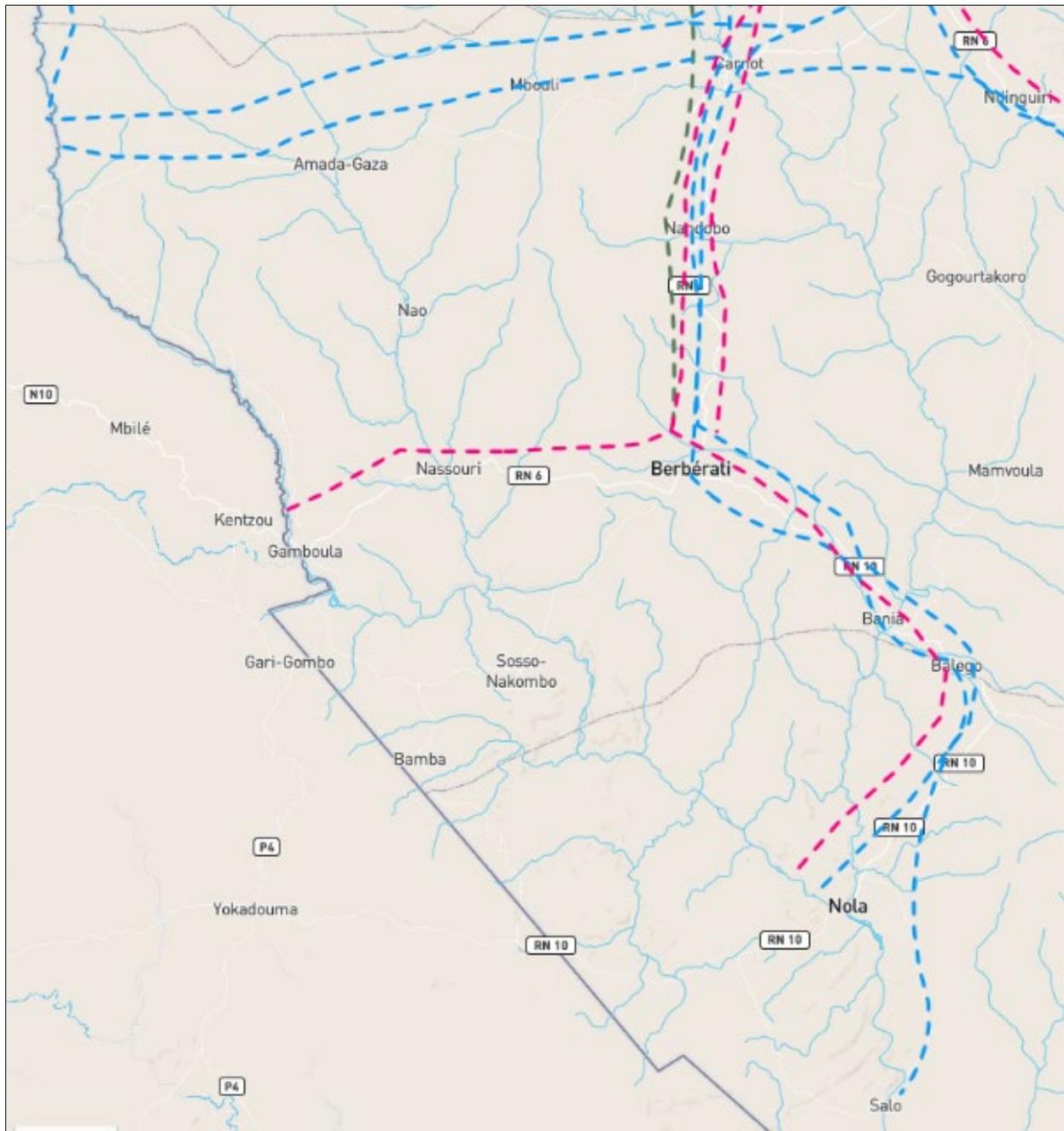
There are several reports of both semi-settled and transhumant herders from Cameroon who vary their routes to avoid 3R armed groups. This includes shifting herding routes south into the Sosso-Nakombo area. (FG with 18 Peulh and Aku transhumant herders from Cameroon, in Dilapoko). as the Kadei River forms a natural barrier against armed groups from accessing the villages. As one observer noted, “Sosso-Nakombo is a town encircled by the Kadei River and for us [transhumants] this river acts as a natural protection between us and the 3R; it would be more difficult for 3R elements to cross the river to reach us on the other side” (FG with Cameroonian transhumant herders in Sosso-Nakombo).

Conversely, there were also anecdotal accounts of the 3R forces burning bridges across the river to slow the advance of MINUSCA into the territory they control. The Secretary-General of FNEC recommended that these bridges be maintained to permit access by the security services.



Photo 2: Enumerator facilitating a focus group with transhumant herders from Chad, in Yerima Badock, Carnot. Photo by Concordis International.

## Map 2: Official Cattle Corridors



Pre-crisis routes are in red (2002), pre-crisis routes in blue (2010)  
Map courtesy of IPIS: <https://ipisresearch.be/mapping/webmapping/car/v3/>.

**Map 3: River Kadei South of the Gamboula-Berberati Road**

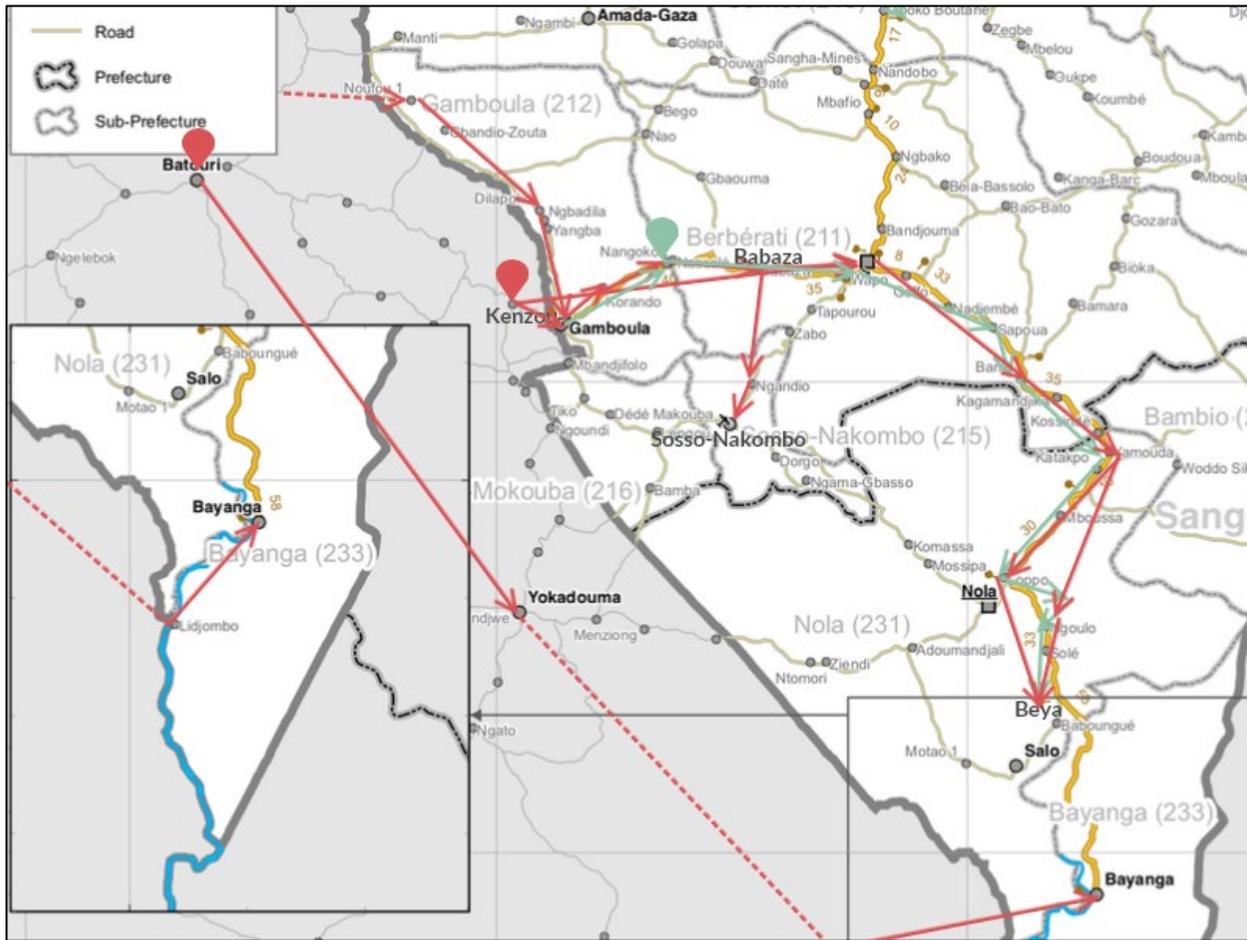


Map prepared by Ana Moens from Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (<http://www.hdptcar.net/>)

The presence of 3R at the border in Gamboula was also cited as a reason for the fragmentation of the routes into CAR from Cameroon, including further north at Noufou I, several different crossings into and routes through Gamboula sub-prefecture, and even a new route further south into Bayanga (see Map 4, next page). During the participatory mapping of traditional and clandestine transhumance routes with *ardos* (traditional herder leaders) and FNEC representatives in Berberati, herders acknowledged that these clandestine routes can take them closer to farmers' fields and bring them into conflict with settled populations, but say they have no choice since the official corridors are occupied by 3R.

Since 2015, there has been increasing seasonal transhumance into the sub-region from Chad, moving into the pasturage left by the displacement of semi-settled herders during the crisis. These Chadian transhumants appear to be pressing further south each year, having entered CAR through Ouham or Ouham Pendé in the northwest (Berberati AMPR workshop, January 20, 2020). The research team encountered several Chadian transhumants, including a Hanagamba group in Carnot, who were traveling as a family unit of both men and women who were making this journey for the first time in 2020.

**Map 4: Pastoralist Transhumance Routes**



Map prepared by Ana Moens from Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (<http://www.hdptcar.net>)

#### 4.5 FEMALE TRANSHUMANTS

Women who accompany their husbands on transhumance face challenges. Traditionally, female transhumants sold milk to female farmers, a trade link that generated symbiotic relationships between different groups of women.<sup>2</sup> The female herders interviewed said that living amongst the community is in both communities' (farmers' and herders') interests. They benefit from "a very good relationship" (FG with Djafoun female herders in Degbemaina)<sup>3</sup> with the settled communities, particularly with the other women. One respondent noted, "When we left, female farmers had to travel miles to Carnot to sell their food; our return seems to be a relief for the female farmers, which further strengthen acceptance between us" (FG with Hanagamba female transhumant herders from Chad).

Women in FGs said they find it increasingly difficult to sell enough milk to maintain their households; family and particularly childcare duties are considered the domain of the women. One attendee

<sup>2</sup> The enumerators spoke to a group of Djafoun women in Degbemaina on the outskirts of Carnot whose husbands are semi-settled returning herders. The enumerators also facilitated an FG with female Hanagamba transhumant herders from Chad, in Carnot.

<sup>3</sup> These respondents identify as semi-settled herders, having recently returned from Cameroon having been displaced there during the 2012–2015 crisis. Though they are Cameroonian, they have settled in CAR. Their *zone d'attache* used to be in Bozoum, but they have found security in Degbemaina so plan to stay here.

explained, “Our husbands have less livestock than in the past, so trade with farmers is damaged” (ibid.). If the cows’ health is not managed properly and diseases left untreated, they produce less milk to sell.

FNEC representatives in Berberati said that many transhumant women sell firewood to earn sufficient money to meet their family’s needs. They are not used to doing this and are concerned. A woman’s FG attendee noted, “Our situation is becoming more and more difficult because we do not have the know-how in areas other than the sale of cows’ milk” (ibid.).

The women feel that people are “much more concerned about the situation of men,” even though they have many important responsibilities (ibid.).

## 4.6 CURRENT CHALLENGES FACED BY HERDERS

In seeking to understand what might motivate some herders in certain circumstances to turn to armed groups, the research team sought to understand the challenges they face. As well as consulting the *ardos* and FNEC representatives in larger towns, the team also wanted to hear from those sleeping in the bush and traveling with the cattle. This following sections present challenges that they raised.

### 4.6.1 ATTACKS BY ARMED GROUPS

The interviews and FGs showed that, whether or not they supported 3R in the past, most herders are now predated upon by 3R and do their level best to avoid them. This includes semi-settled herders in CAR and foreign transhumants from Cameroon and Chad. At the same time, a small minority of herders are more closely aligned with 3R, and it’s important to understand why that is. At least 50 percent of all herders interviewed report having been attacked by 3R in the past year, 15 percent by anti-balaka groups, and another 5 percent by an armed group they choose not to identify. These attacks resulted in the loss of either cattle or money. Interview analysis indicates that 50 percent of herders feel unsafe, as compared to 36 percent of non-herder respondents who feel unsafe.

All respondents blame armed groups for insecurity, although several were cautious about blaming any group by name. Sixty-six percent of herders blame 3R for the insecurity (as do 57 percent of farmers), the remaining third blame armed groups they choose not to identify (as do 43 percent of farmers). Twelve percent of herders also blame anti-Balaka groups. The Siriri armed group is viewed by 7 percent of all respondents as the greatest threat to security. Semi-settled and transhumant herders, farmers, miners, and local authorities all describe how herders have had to adapt their routes to try to avoid 3R, as mapped above at Section 4.4. They describe this as being costly to them, especially if it means they miss opportunities to have their animals vaccinated at the border, or if the new route takes them close to farms, requiring them to compensate farmers if their cattle damage crops.

FGs with male and female Chadian Hanagamba transhumants in Carnot describe being afraid of 3R, who make surprise attacks on their camp every two months, taking 150,000 XAF (\$260) and their choice of cattle.

#### 3R and the Settled Population

“When 3R arrive in the village, they tell communities, ‘Don’t be scared, we won’t hurt you; we’ve only come for the herders.’”

–The mayor and the head of ACDA in Carnot

Cameroonian transhumants in Dilapoko, Gamboula, said the same, adding that 3R take two head of cattle from a herd of 100, always taking the healthiest animals with the highest value. As noted in conversations highlighted below, security is a major concern.

## Gamboula Municipal Authorities' Perspective on the Relationship between Some Herders and Armed Groups

Herders' relationships with armed groups have evolved over time. During the 2012–2015 crisis, they were victims of anti-Balaka, so they called on Siriri's elements (mostly made up of Peulhs), who generally carry out reprisal attacks on villages where cattle rustling has been reported or herders have been targeted. This used to work for them, until they found that Siriri's attacks were becoming too frequent and putting their own lives at risk. This pushed herders to move into areas where there was no Siriri presence. They moved near villages and integrated themselves into the settled communities, to protect themselves.

Some herders contacted 3R to negotiate a contract for protection against Siriri's racketeering. They did this without realising that 3R are more dangerous and far-reaching in their methods. The 3R follow herders everywhere under the pretext that they are protecting them. However, herders have clearly noted that this is a forced relationship, and if nothing is done in the next three to four years, there will be no herders left in this region. The focus group of Aku transhumant herders from Cameroon in Baboungué, Nola said that this would have very negative consequences for the lives of settled people.

This predation of herders by both 3R and anti-balaka groups represents a failure of state security and the rule of law and leads to the enriching of armed groups, which increases the appeal of joining armed groups over legal livelihood options. It also causes herders to take clandestine routes (as noted in Section 4.4), denying the state an opportunity to offer vaccination services or to collect revenue at the border, both of which are discussed further below.

As herders take clandestine routes or seek the protection afforded by being close to villages, they run a higher risk that their cattle will destroy fields. This causes conflict, which lowers the likelihood of mutually beneficial trade. It also requires compensation to be paid and lowers food security.

A minority of herders still look to 3R for security, paying for this service, particularly in response to attacks from anti-balaka groups and bandits. As one interviewee noted, "Some even integrate their sons into the group to benefit from its protection" (FG with FNEC representative in Dilapoko with 18 Peulh and Aku transhumant herders from Cameroon).

The research team found two herder groups support 3R and trust them for the protection of their livestock. Some livestock herders show at least partial support for 3R from herders: 22 percent of herders admitted that some people in their community support 3R. By comparison, 17 percent of the settled population express open support for self-defense groups, with 33 percent saying some in their community support them. This support is highest in Bayanga, where 43 percent give open support and 29 percent say some in the community support self-defense groups. In Sosso-Nakombo, 26 percent of herders and 53 percent of farmers say they do not know about support for armed groups. Enumerators were aware of the presence of 3R elements in these interview locations and observed respondents appeared uncomfortable talking about this subject. The majority of herders are caught both ways; they are preyed upon by 3R, yet many settled groups suspect them of collusion with 3R.

"The anti-balaka and Seleka have different methods; the Seleka target populations through racketeering and illegal taxation, whereas the anti-balaka seize livestock and burn houses."

– FNEC representative in Dilapoko in FG with 18 Peulh and Aku transhumant herders from Cameroon

"Some even integrate their sons into the group in order to benefit from its protection."

– Central African Djafoun herder, displaced to Cameroon and recently returned, in interview in Gamboula

"Most settled people cannot distinguish between this group of herders and the rest, who are not in cahoots with armed groups. This had a gravely negative impact on acceptance of herder populations."

– Interview with the head of livestock in Gamboula

An important finding of the research is the response to the three questions to herders (“Who would you call if your cattle were attacked or stolen?”, “Who do you trust for your security?”, and “Would you tell 3R if you’ve had your cattle stolen?”). Herders would report the theft to the authorities, whether the gendarme, village chief, *ardo*, or MINUSCA. Only two herders trust 3R for security; the rest refer to state security forces. However, in response to the third question, 95 percent herders would also notify 3R that their cattle had been stolen.

The respondents are concerned about the extortion of money and livestock by the 3R. To avoid predation, the herders try to vary their herding routes as much as possible to avoid the 3R, but this is at great personal cost. At the same time, most herders do inform 3R when they’ve been attacked. Much of this report is devoted to examining why this is, seeking local recommendations as to how the state and other actors might better fulfill their role in providing security and thereby further lowering the appeal of armed groups.

#### 4.6.2 CATTLE RUSTLING

At least half of all herders interviewed have been subjected to cattle rustling in the past year, particularly in Gamboula and Carnot. More than half of the victims of cattle rustling name 3R, one quarter name anti-balaka, the remainder accuse members of the community or unnamed armed groups. Increases in the number of cattle rustling incidents are partly due to organized crime (see Section 4.6.1), but they were also sometimes explained as being a result of youth unemployment in mining areas.

Artisanal miners in Nola said the rise in cattle rustling in Beya and Mbanza is directly linked to the closing of buying houses, the lack of pre-financing by collectors, and the monopoly of Chinese mining industries (FG with 12 members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola).

Miners said that the lack of mining opportunities “makes it easier for them to become cattle thieves” (ibid.). This has potential to cause a significant rift between herding and settled communities, leading to increased inter-community conflict (Interview with regional head of livestock in Berberati). If herders are driven away from villages by young cattle rustlers, trade will also suffer.



Photo 3: A semi-settled herders' cattle-camp in Beya. Photo by Concordis International.

#### 4.6.3 ILLEGAL TAXATION

At least one quarter of herders surveyed reported being taxed illegally in the past year, mostly in Gamboula. More than half of the victims named 3R and one third named the gendarme or police, with the remainder being unable or unwilling to name their attacker. It is not clear whether the level of illegal taxation is higher than one quarter, with herders reporting the more serious offense of cattle rustling instead. It is clear that herders regard payments to 3R as illegal. Predation and illegal taxation by security services undermine attempts to persuade herders to turn to them for security instead of reliance on armed groups. Both herders and farmers complain about the costs of referring grievances to the gendarme for resolution.

#### 4.6.4 OCCUPATION OF RETURNEES' HOMES BY THE SETTLED POPULATION

Most returnee herders displaced by the events of 2012–2015 returned to find their houses and shops destroyed or occupied by people from the settled population. In some cases, these properties were

returned voluntarily or in exchange for a small fee to cover the cost of maintaining the house (FG with five butchers [four men and one woman] in Sosso-Nakombo) in a process sometimes overseen by the mayor (FG with six Ouda semi-settled returnee herders, who own some cattle, in Sosso-Nakombo) or *chef de village* (village leader) (FG with seven village leaders in Beya). In some cases, the houses were occupied by consent, with members of the settled population agreeing to protect them during the owner's absence.

“We saw up to 20 herders living under one roof; they do not have the financial means to release their houses from the secondary occupants. A lot of returnee herders do not own any cows, having lost them all during the 2012-15 crisis. Many of them are farming to supplement their income.”

– Observations from a Concordis enumerator

In other cases, this has been more difficult and antagonistic (FG with 12 artisanal miners in Beya), particularly for those who lost their livestock and now work as shepherds for others. Without the means to compensate the occupier, many returnees have not been able to recover their home. In some cases, returnees have had to leave their families behind in Cameroon until they can find a home for them in CAR.

#### 4.6.5 LIVESTOCK HEALTH

Veterinary medicine is extremely important to herders, but many find services difficult to access (FG with 15 semi-settled returnee herders, including the head of livestock, in Gamboula)<sup>4</sup> and many veterinary pharmacies remain closed since the 2012–2015 crisis (Interview with FNEC representative in Beya). Shepherds employed by Cameroonian owners of larger herds say the owners send medicines when needed; this is not practical, as products may not arrive on time (*ibid.*). Returnee herders in Beya lost five cows in the previous two months, caused by the ingestion of poisonous plants; they had been unable to access the correct treatment (FG with four semi-settled returnee Djafoun and Aku herders in Beya).

“I feel unable to help the herders due to the heavy presence of armed groups...usually animals are checked for disease by the head of livestock before slaughter, but this is not happening.”

– Interview with the head of livestock in Gamboula

In Sosso-Nakombo, returnee herders complained that the veterinary pharmacy set up by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was unaffordable and products were cheaper in Cameroon (FG with six Ouda semi-settled returnee herders in Sosso-Nakombo). The livestock medication available in Carnot is described as being of low-quality (FG with 14 semi-settled returnee herders in Toutoubou, Carnot).

When traditional cattle routes are occupied by armed groups, this restricts access by technical services, who then do not provide quarantine and vaccination stations at the border (see also Section 4.6.6 below). This imperils both transhumant herders' cattle and also those of settled herders in CAR if contaminated livestock come into contact with them. Even if technical services are operational on the border, herders will take clandestine routes if the traditional routes are patrolled by armed groups, which means missing quarantine and vaccination stations in any event (FG with six Ouda semi-settled returnee herders in Sosso-Nakombo).

Limited access to technical services requires herders to administer treatments themselves using poor quality medicines sold in the market, despite having little training (Interview with the head of livestock in

<sup>4</sup> According to those consulted in this FG, there are three main kinds of disease, locally called Boumsoudé, Mboro, and Samoré. Boumsoudé is deadly and it is very difficult access the veterinary products corresponding to the necessary treatment on the market. While the government typically provides them with the drugs they need; they have not received the drugs in recent years, although they are not sure of the reasons behind this. Samoré attacks the animals' tails, first appearing as a scab, then destroying the animal's hair, rendering it sterile. This loses the herders money because the animal is no longer able to reproduce.

Gamboula). The Gamboula head of livestock said “Transhumant herders in Carnot said they now sell the sick animal before it gets too ill, at a lower price, using the money to buy a healthy calf” (FG with seven Hanagamba transhumant herders in Yerima Badock, Carnot).

#### 4.6.6 ACCESS TO TECHNICAL SERVICES

As well as supporting herders with veterinary services, technical services have in the past also hosted migration conferences in anticipation of transhumants arriving. These meetings brought together the municipal authorities, community leaders, the gendarmes, the police, *ardos*, FNEC representatives, and others. The objectives of these meetings are to prepare the settled population to receive transhumant herders; explain how to manage conflicts related to crop damage or disputed access to water; discuss migration routes, taking into account population increases; encourage people to respect the authorities; agree on payment of taxes; and vaccinate cattle at the border. Transhumant herders report that the presence of 3R deters them from crossing the border at the regular routes for fear of illegal taxation; when technical services are also deterred from being present and are unable to offer support, the incentive to use the regular routes is further reduced.

“During the crisis, we lost more than half our livestock due to armed robberies by unidentified armed bandits. We were forced to flee to Cameroon via Bocaranga and Kouï. We don’t know these corridors and found ourselves in areas controlled by anti-balaka, who also stole many of our cattle. Before the crisis we owned 450 heads, now we are left with 150. Our remaining cattle are infected with PPCB [Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia / sleeping sickness]. We buy medicines from street vendors and administer the treatment ourselves. This is risky. We have already lost two cows this year [February 2020].”

– Focus group with 12 FNEC representatives in Berberati

#### 4.6.7 CROP DAMAGE FROM LIVESTOCK

A group of semi-settled herders, originally from Cameroon, explained 3R’s presence along transhumance corridors forced herders to forge new routes closer to towns and villages, “often trespassing on farmers’ fields.” They said this is a huge concern for them. One group of farmers told enumerators that herders (unspecified which groups) sometimes offer to build wooden fencing around farmers’ fields to reduce conflict, to both of their benefits (FG with seven Hanagamba transhumant herders in Yerima Badock, Carnot).

#### 4.6.8 ECONOMIC SHOCKS

Herders displaced by the 2012–2015 crisis have slowly started to return but in a greatly impoverished state (FG with a group of semi-settled returnee herders in Sola). The FNEC representatives in Berberati explained that 80 percent of herders who fled the country to take refuge in Cameroon have lost most if not all of their cattle (FG with 12 FNEC representatives in Berberati).

#### 4.6.9 POOR COMMUNICATION WITH SETTLED COMMUNITIES, OR BETWEEN LEVELS OF THE AUTHORITIES

Settled farmers note that there is suspicion against those livestock raisers who are viewed as “new” to the area. The most common reason given for being more uneasy about these new arrivals is because

settled farmers do not know whether they have been officially registered by legal authorities (including payment of taxes, health checks, and quarantining of cattle).<sup>5</sup>

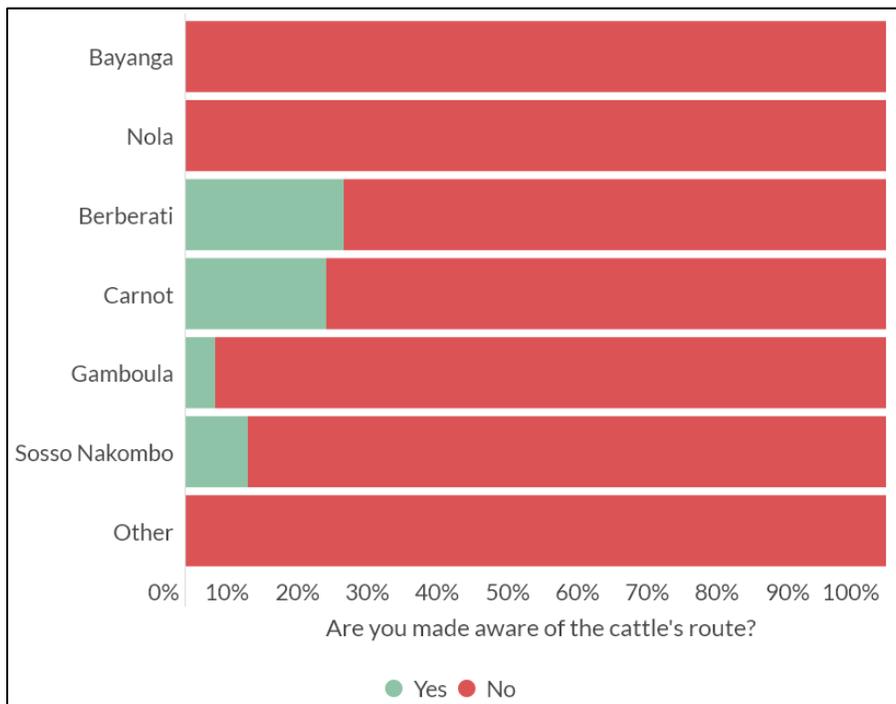
Deeper conversations with settled groups revealed that it's important that these groups are informed about any new arrivals by their traditional leaders. This includes their anticipated time of arrival, the duration of their stay, the routes they intend to take, and the location of their camps. The settled groups become very uncomfortable if they feel that their leader has been disrespected or if they are surprised by strangers or livestock in their fields.

“Transhumant herders have lost their habit of reporting to the authorities; we only know they have arrived because we see them at the market or in the bush.”

– Focus group with members of farming cooperative in Gamboula

When 146 settled people were asked whether they were informed of the herders' arrival in advance, just 18 people had been notified; 88 percent had not been told (see Figure 1). Those who had been informed were usually told by their mayor, but mayors cover huge geographic areas.

**Figure 1: Communication of Transhumants' Arrival to the Settled Population**



There are important gaps in communication between the municipal authorities and the local or village traditional authorities (FG with 14 members of Mononwelé farming cooperative in Gamboula). Transhumants may consider they have followed the correct protocol by reporting to the municipal authorities and paying tax to them, but this does not mean that either the information or the taxes are passed on to the villages. This leads to the accusation that “The municipal authorities are facilitating the access of foreigners into this country” (FG with 14 members of Mononwelé farming cooperative in Gamboula). There is a strong need for improved communication mechanisms among different levels of government. This will likely contribute to a wider acceptance of herders by settled populations and fewer shocks that lead to conflict.

<sup>5</sup> In Nola, the local authorities said they were “concerned about foreign transhumants whom the population do not recognize and who have not been registered.”

#### 4.6.10 UNCLEAR TAXATION RULES

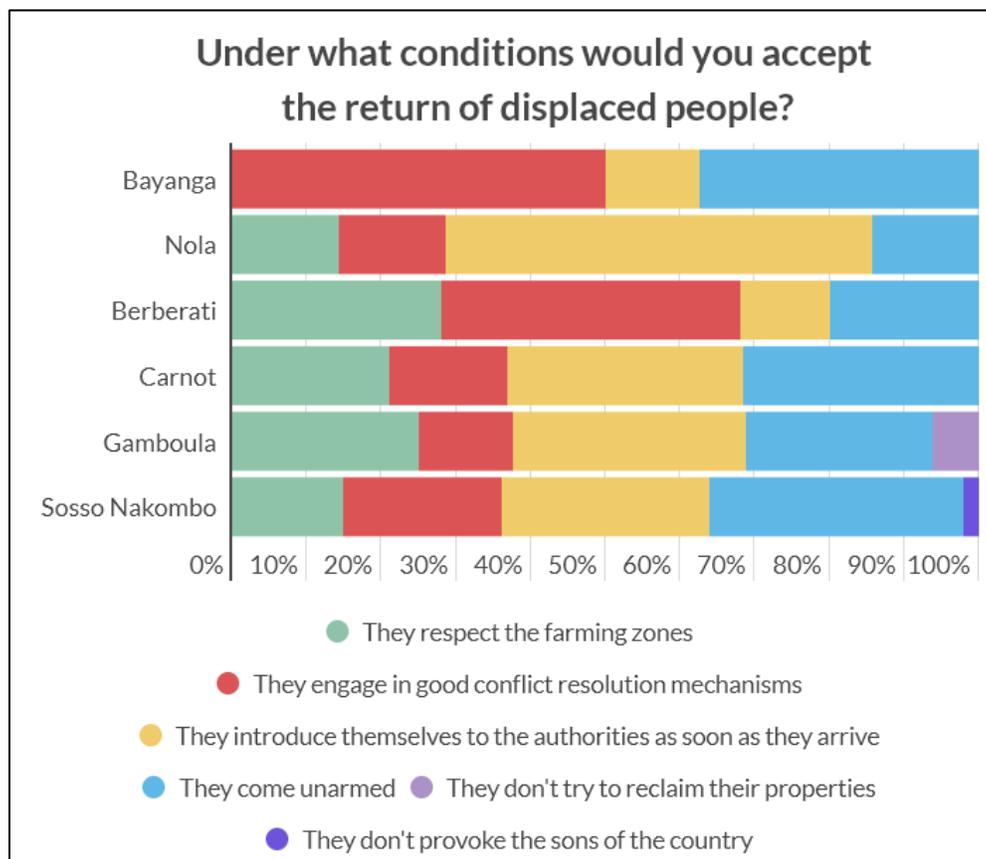
Both herders and people in settled communities complain at what they perceived to be a lack of transparency, communication, and synergy among municipal authorities, the local authorities, and the communities in announcing the arrival of transhumant herders and in administering and spending the tax revenue received from them.

Transhumant herders from Cameroon said that they understood they should pay tax to both municipal and local authorities, but they were asked to pay the total sum to the municipal authorities. They believe this causes local people, particularly the youth, to resent them (FG with 10 Djafoun transhumant herders from Cameroon in Dourgo, Sosso-Nakombo). They recommend that a meeting be held with the different local actors involved to clarify their roles regarding the management of transhumance activities and the collection of taxation. They recommend that some of that tax provide direct benefit to host communities, as this will help them appreciate the presence of herders in their midst.

#### 4.6.11 ATTITUDES TOWARDS DISPLACED PEOPLE AND RETURNEES

Seventy-three percent of settled respondents said they were willing to accept the return of displaced herders, 26 percent said they would accept their return under certain conditions, and 1 percent (3 people reported they would not accept their return. There was slightly more reticence in Sosso-Nakombo. The three most important conditions identified were that returnees engage in a good conflict resolution mechanism, that they are unarmed, and that they introduce themselves to the authorities as soon as they arrive.

**Figure 2: If You Would Accept Displaced Herders Back with Conditions, What Would These Be?**



This is a clear recommendation from the settled populations to put in place a process to ensure better announcement of transhumant herders and a transparent and mutually accepted mechanism to resolve conflict fairly and quickly. Both mechanisms need to be trusted, owned, and used by the communities.

#### 4.6.12 SNAPSHOT OF SOCIAL RELATIONS AROUND WEDDINGS

Respondents were asked about the social interactions they have with members of other groups. Their responses provide measurable proxies for social cohesion, which can be monitored over time and disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, or geographic location. The most revealing of these was respondents' attendance at wedding of each of the other groups in the previous year, and whether respondents would accept such an invitation now.

“Last year (2019), semi-settled herders in our village donated a cow to the community for the December 1st celebrations that take place in Nola.”

– A young Central African Djafoun herder, who is also a farmer, interviewed in Carnot.

- Of settled community respondents who had been to a wedding in the previous year, only 10 percent attended the wedding of a herder; this is an expression of low social cohesion.
- Fifty-five percent of miners and 30 percent of other settled groups would probably refuse to attend a transhumant wedding. If the wedding is for semi-settled herders, 85 percent of farmers would probably attend, but only 50 percent of miners would probably accept.
- For the wedding of a miner or a farmer, nearly all respondents would normally accept an invitation, including herders. Some miners appear unwilling to attend any weddings.
- Three semi-settled herders said they would refuse to attend a transhumant wedding, whereas they would attend a settled community wedding.
- There is significantly more reticence toward herders in Sosso-Nakombo, at the far south of the zone.

#### 4.6.13 LESSONS LEARNED FROM NORTHWESTERN CAR<sup>6</sup>

In the northwest of CAR, the research team experienced similar issues, albeit with higher levels of violence. Transhumant herders said that they use clandestine routes because, firstly, they cannot be assured of protection from 3R by the security services on the official corridors and, secondly, that they are taxed punitively by the authorities on both sides of the border. Their use of clandestine routes was bringing them into conflict with settled communities, as in the south-west.

In response, the research team was asked to facilitate two high-level workshops. The first was for the local authorities from prefectures on either side of the Chad/CAR border. They agreed to act bilaterally and to reduce taxation on both sides of the border, making the official corridor more attractive to transhumants. A lower tax that was collectible was preferable to the authorities on both sides of the border to a higher tax bill that was avoided.

The second workshop was for members of four different armed groups (including 3R) to discuss security arrangements with senior officers in FACA, as well as with herders and farmers from CAR civil society. The armed groups agreed to leave the area on the condition that the security services mounted patrols of the cattle corridors, protecting transhumants. This is very much in the spirit of the Khartoum

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<sup>6</sup> See IPIS/Concordis, 2020.

Agreement and rooted practically and accountably in a very specific local context (IPIS/Concordis, 2020; United Nations Security Council, 2019).

#### 4.7 HERDERS' ROLE IN THE DIAMOND TRADE

The dynamics of gold and diamond smuggling across the border into Cameroon is not the subject of this report. While it exists, this is a separate research task. Similarly, this report does not address the involvement of armed groups in the mining and smuggling of diamonds or gold. USAID reports prepared by IPIS (Jallon and de Brier, 2019) and AMPR explore this subject in detail.

The research team were charged with investigating herder involvement in the financing and movement of diamonds, including the suggestion made by artisanal miners in Nassolé, that the return of semi-settled Peulhs is a problem for them (see text box).

“Some [herders] are involved in mining and buy diamonds illegally, taking advantage of the movement of their livestock to transport it to neighboring Cameroon, where they sell it at a higher price...this enforces the climate of mistrust between financiers and artisanal miners.”

– Focus Group of artisanal miners in Nassolé

Several issues were identified:

- Some artisanal miners who are pre-financed then sell the diamonds they find to people other than their sponsor, in breach of contract.
- Even if these are just rumors, this undermines the relationship of trust that should exist between miners and collectors, which sours their relationship. In Carnot and Berberati, miners are sometimes supervised by armed men hired by the financiers.
- The diamond buying houses are not buying or pre-financing artisanal miners as they used to before the crisis. This is a major source of local grievance (FG with artisanal miners in Beya).
- Collectors from other countries (Cameroon, DRC) are offering finance and paying higher prices for diamonds, including those mined in zones that are not Kimberley Process (KP) compliant. These financiers include people who also own large herds of cattle and may include collectors who were displaced during the crisis.
- Increasingly, armed groups take note of diamond and gold extraction in the mining sites and this was particularly noticeable in Nassolé, Gamboula, and Dilapoko, in the KP non-compliant sub-prefecture of Gamboula.
- Most herders are not involved in the diamond trade and have no personal or commercial engagement with miners beyond the limited sale of milk and meat. That includes most foreign transhumants from both Cameroon and Chad.
- However, a small minority of herders are involved in the diamond trade. This includes some owners of large herds who commission their people to mine for or otherwise procure diamonds for export to Cameroon.

The first four of these issues are known and analyzed in other USAID studies (Jallon and de Brier, 2019) and are not the subject of this research, although they were confirmed in several of the FGs with miners and local authorities.

The last two assertions, that most herders are not involved in the diamond trade, but some are, and are prosecuted here more thoroughly.

#### 4.7.1 EVIDENCE FROM THE HERDERS

All respondents were asked about their primary and any secondary professions. Over 50 percent all respondents had a secondary profession, but just 32 percent for herders. Seventeen percent of respondents were also farmers, 12 percent were also traders, and just two confirmed also being involved in buying, selling, or mining diamonds. Both of these herders are profiled in the text box below.

Most of the herders interviewed individually or in FGs, including semi-settled returnees and transhumant herders from Cameroon and Chad, report that they are trying to rebuild their herds and are not selling them, either live or for meat.

#### 4.7.2 EVIDENCE FROM THE BUTCHERS

Butchers interviewed confirmed that both cattle numbers and herd sizes have decreased dramatically since 2012–2015. Although herders are gradually returning to CAR, the price of livestock has increased markedly, due to herders seeking to rebuild their herds and their reluctance to sell cattle, either alive or for meat.

Butchers in Sosso-Nakombo explained that, when they are unable to buy livestock from herders in the locality, they rely on supply chains from Cameroon. The suppliers first arrive at Garikombo (in Cameroon) where they deliver cattle to buyers (including the butchers), who in turn lead them toward Molaye, then Dede-Mokouba, finally arriving at Sosso-Nakombo (see Map 5, next page).

Farmers confirm that a kilogram of beef meat used to cost 1,100 XAF (\$1.80); it is now sold for 2,200 XAF (\$3.60), although these prices will vary between regions and seasons (FG with 12 butchers in Sosso-Nakombo). Butchers interviewed are concerned this is causing a rift between them and their customers, most of whom are settled farmers from their communities.

While herders have capital that they could use to fund diamond exploitation, for the most part, they are not using their assets to enter into mining or to sell their livestock assets. The lack of livestock sales limits sales for butchers, this in turn contributes to a meat shortage, and thus increased prices..

“The price of oxen varies from village to village...before the [2012–2015] crisis, a two-year-old ox cost 150,000XAF [\$250]. Now, the price is 200,000 to 250,000XAF [\$335–\$420] or even 300,000XAF [\$500] for a cow. This increase is due to scarcity on the market...many herders lost their oxen during the crisis.”

– FG with Semi-settled returnee herders working as shepherds, in Toutoubou, Carnot

“Buyers of meat do not realize the trouble we have to go through, to bring meat to their local market.”

– FG with 12 butchers in Sosso-Nakombo

### Map 5: Route to Supply Meat Markets in Sosso-Nakombo



Map prepared by Ana Moens from Concordis using maps from Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (<http://www.hdptcar.net>)

#### 4.7.3 EVIDENCE FROM ARTISANAL MINERS

When their confidentiality is respected, miners and mining cooperatives in both Kimberly-certified zones and non-certified sub-prefectures admit to, “cheating their financiers,” “not playing fair,” and “selling to other people, sometimes abroad to Muslims because the latter buy the diamond at a higher price.”

Due to the crisis, most collectors lost their property and so do not have the means to finance mining activities... nowadays, most collectors cannot pay for diamond in cash, so some artisanal miners are selling them across the border, in Cameroon. We found more than 15 carats in the last three months which we sold in Cameroon.

– Anonymized artisanal miners

#### 4.7.4 A MINORITY OF HERDERS ARE INVOLVED IN THE DIAMOND TRADE

The research team believes that there are only a few livestock raisers involved in the diamond trade. As representatives of an artisanal mining cooperative noted in Nola, the absence of buying houses has given way to a group of people who arrive via clandestine routes to buy diamonds and sell them to Cameroon and Congo...many of the herders have become artisanal miners because they have the means to pre-finance their activities...they infiltrate groups of transhumant herders to by-pass controls. Some smuggle products out of the country with the complicity of the military authorities stationed at the borders.

##### Pre-Financing for Farming

A group of farmers in Toutoubou, 25 km from Carnot, used to do some artisanal mining. As this was pre-financed, they would use part of the mining income to pay for farming labor. This yielded good returns on both activities. However, this ceased due to a lack of pre-financing, so neither occupation is now as lucrative.

Below, the research team recounts the three examples found of livestock raisers engaged in the diamond trade, and one example of a farmer who also trades diamonds.

### Profiles of the Three Herders Involved in the Diamond Trade

1. A Central African *Djafoun* herder, displaced to Cameroon and recently returned to CAR, was interviewed in Gamboula. He sells diamonds once a month to transhumant herders and his livelihood is totally dependent on this interaction. He also buys diamonds once a month from artisanal miners. He is one of the two herders who trust 3R to ensure protection of his cattle. *“I receive funding from the owner of the cattle I look after, who is based in Cameroon, to undertake artisanal mining as a secondary occupation. I use clandestine market chains to supply neighboring Cameroon.”*
2. A young Central African *Aku* herder, who is also as an artisanal miner, displaced to Cameroon and recently returned to CAR was interviewed in Berberati. He buys diamonds from artisanal miners and sells to transhumant herders once a month. His livelihood is totally dependent on these interactions. A young, Central African *Djafoun* herder and farmer was interviewed in Carnot. He recently returned from Nigeria. He buys diamonds once a month from artisanal miners and is fairly dependent on this interaction for his livelihood.

### Profile of a Farmers Who is also a Diamond Trader

1. A farmer in Nola who is also an artisanal miner was interviewed in Berberati. He buys diamonds from artisanal miners once a week and is “totally dependent” on this interaction.

## 4.8 EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION NETWORKS WORKING WELL

### 4.8.1 THE ARDO IN BEYA

Several groups expressed appreciation for an *ardo* in Beya who acts as the go-between for herders, the local authorities, and the settled community (Reported during FG with 15 leaders of a female farming cooperative in Beya; FG with 13 male community youth leaders in Beya; and seven *chefs de village* in Beya). People in the settled population said of him:

- “He facilitates the access of new arrivals [herders] and shows them where to feed and water their cattle” (FG with leaders of a female farming cooperative in Beya).
- “He demarcates the grazing areas for the newcomers” (FG with community youth leaders in Beya).
- “He is very integrated among the settled communities” (ibid.).
- “He has a good relationship with the group leader” (FG with leaders of a female farming cooperative in Beya).

Herders also reported their appreciation for him:

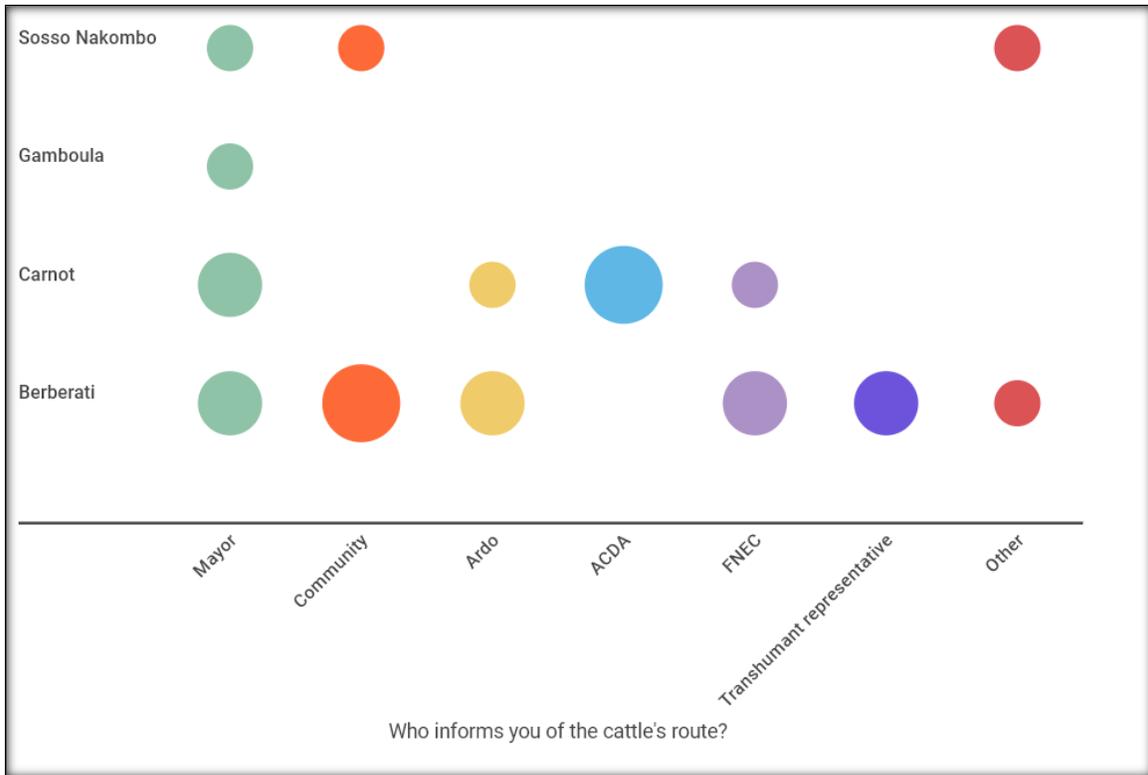
- “We send an advance mission to verify security, to check availability of pasture, space and particularly water points, as well as to get in touch with the local authorities...this allows the authorities to keep settled people informed and to prevent any sense of panic” (FG with four *Djafoun* and *Aku* semi-settled herders, all returnees and working as shepherds, in Beya).
- “We addressed a letter to the authorities before arriving, expressing our desire to return to CAR to resume our herding activities” (FG with two *Rahadji* semi-settled herders originally from Cameroon, recently returned and now settled in CAR, in Beya).

### 4.8.2 THE FNEC REPRESENTATIVE IN CARNOT

The research team also found a FNEC representative who is very engaged with the communities and enthusiastic about consultation with herder groups.

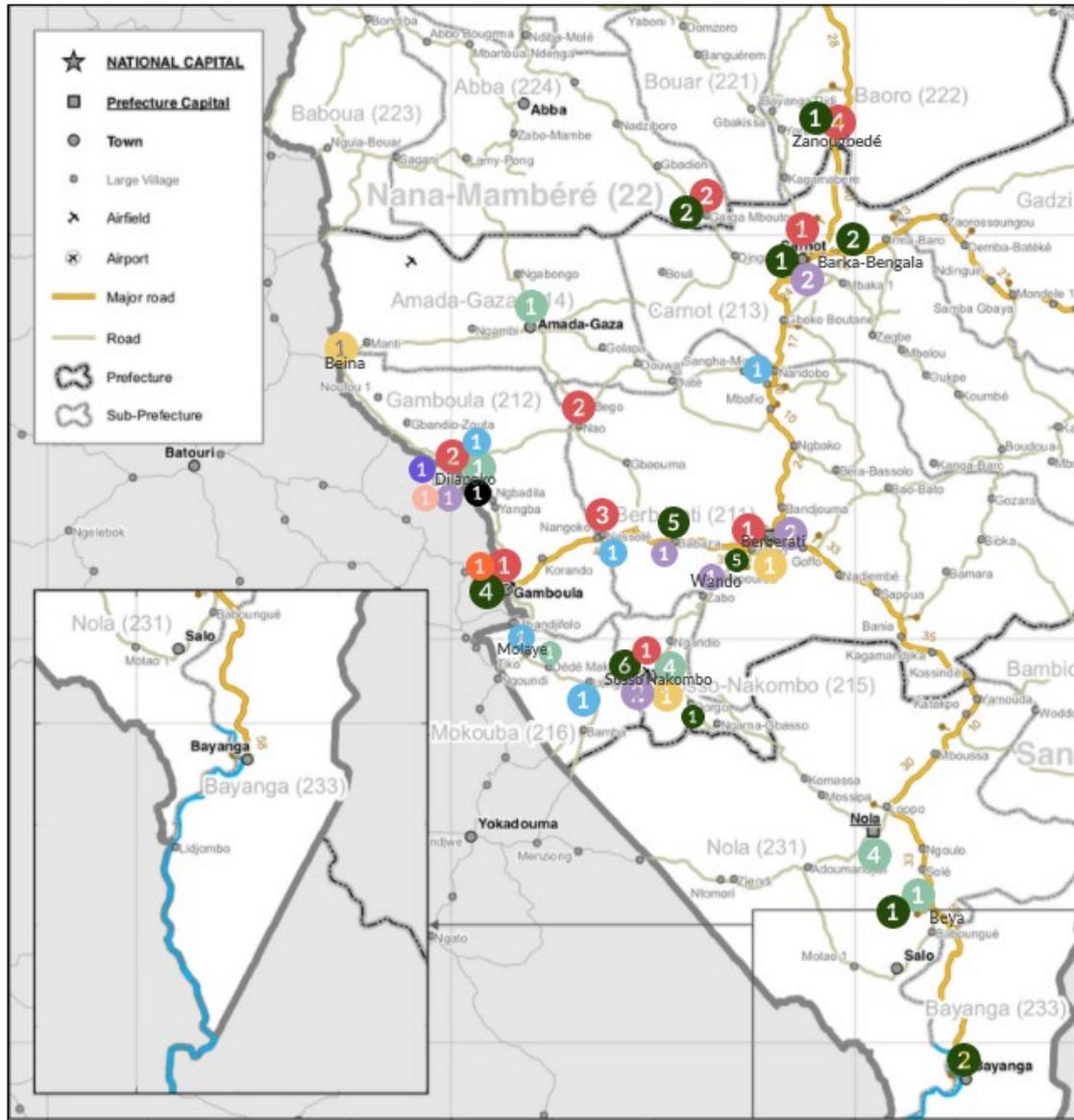
When local populations were informed about the arrival of the herders, there are several ways that they learned this information, including from the mayor, the *ardo*, or a FNEC representative. The key message from the community was that it doesn't matter who passes on the information, as long as someone does it.

**Figure 3: Who Informs of Herders' Arrival**



## 5.0 HOSTILE OR PREDATORY RELATIONSHIPS

Map 6: Location, Number, and Types of Incidents Reported through the Surveys



- Cattle rustling (Dec 2018-Feb 2020)
- Theft (March 2018-Dec 2019)
- Physical violence (Sep 2019-Feb 2020)
- Damage to crops by cattle (Sep 2018-Feb 2020)
- Crops set on fire (April 2018-Feb 2020)
- Damage to my home (March 2018)
- Illegal taxation (July 2018-Feb 2020)
- House set on fire (December 2019)
- Torture (November 2017)
- Cattle killing (August 2019)

Map prepared by Ana Moens of Concordis using maps from Humanitarian and Development Partnership Team (<http://www.hdptcar.net>)

## 5.1 CAUSES OF INSECURITY, MOST SERIOUS OFFENSES, AND ACTORS RESPONSIBLE

Perhaps unsurprisingly, all respondents blame armed groups for their insecurity, with more than half of each group naming 3R and most of the others blaming unnamed armed groups. Respondents had the opportunity to give more than one response and 15 percent of farmers also blame foreign transhumants. A similar percentage of herders also blame anti-balaka groups.

### 5.1.1 ROOT CAUSES OF INSECURITY

When asked about the root causes of insecurity, just over 50 percent cited the presence of 3R as a factor; notably, over 60 percent cite weak state presence, poverty, and porous borders. Several of the recommendations arising from this research relate to improving state capacity.

To encourage deeper contextual analysis and increased reflection beyond the rumors and stereotypes, respondents were then asked which groups had actually targeted them in the past year, and for details of the offense committed. The offenses mentioned are serious and include arson of homes and fields (6 percent of all respondents), both of which can be caused by power dynamics and perceived injustice (Tidjani, 2015). However, when 216 respondents were asked about offenses committed against them in the past year, just 5 people mention physical violence. All others report offenses against property or that they have not been a recent victim of an offense. Even taking into account underreporting, this is markedly different from the research team's experience in the north of CAR. Notwithstanding the presence of armed groups operating in the region, in 2019 to early 2020, the level of physical violence appears significantly lower than in many other parts of the country.

- Twenty-five percent of farmers report falling victim to foreign transhumants, Peulh, or herders; in all cases, this involved damage to crops by livestock. This is more prevalent in Berberati and less common in Nola and Bayanga. Herders, whether semi-settled or “foreign transhumants,” were not accused by name of any other offenses.
- Four percent of farmers have been attacked by 3R, 3 percent by anti-Balaka, and 3 percent by unidentified armed groups.
- Miners blame insecurity on 3R, although they have been victims of anti-Balaka groups.
- At least 50 percent of all herders interviewed report having been attacked by 3R in the past year, 15 percent have been attacked by anti-balaka groups, and 5 percent were attacked by an armed group they choose not to identify. These attacks resulted in the loss of either cattle or money.
- At least 50 percent of all herders interviewed have been subjected to cattle rustling in the past year, particularly in Gamboula and Carnot.
- At least 25 percent of herders report being taxed illegally in the past year, mostly in Gamboula and mostly by 3R, police, or gendarmes.

## 5.2 PERCEPTION OF INSECURITY AS A NATURAL RESOURCES CONFLICT

The establishment of the *communes d'élevage* in the 1960s is based on the premise that segregating the land would prevent conflict and competition over land and other natural resources. Respondents had a strong perception of the land in terms of its designation as primarily for pasturage, farming, or mining; both farmers and miners described moving

“The overlapping of land uses leads to conflicts that make it a challenge for communities to co-exist because of the lack of good mechanisms for resolving these conflicts.”

—Focus Group with 10 artisanal miners in Nassolé

onto land set aside for grazing once the herders left following the crisis, suspecting they would not return.

### 5.2.1 FINDINGS

As part of the conflict analysis, the research team sought to understand the extent to which those involved consider themselves to be in a natural resource conflict and, if so, with whom.

- Fifty-four percent of respondents consider themselves in competition for access to natural resources such as water, land, pastures, and wood. Significantly, 46 percent don't consider themselves in a natural resources conflict.
- Thirty-three percent of farmers consider themselves in competition for natural resources with herders. Twenty-five percent considers themselves in competition with other farmers, miners, or foreign companies, but more than 50 percent of farmers don't see this as a natural resource conflict.
- Fifty percent of the herder respondents consider themselves in competition for natural resources with farmers. Ten percent compete for space with artisanal miners.
- Most artisanal miners believe that they compete for use of natural resources with a range of different actors, including foreign companies, other miners, and herders.

It is simplistic to imagine the conflict in terms of herders against farmers or any other division by ethnicity or livelihood: miners compete against miners; relations between herders are often conflictual; farming neighbors compete for resources, and some semi-settled herders would attend a local wedding but not one of a seasonal transhumant. These data sets analyzed below show strong demand for:

- Clarification over the status of the pasturage zones, potentially with compensation or enforcement for those affected;
- Access to the rule of law without predation or exploitation by the authorities; and
- Sharing of revenue with local communities, whether that revenue is taken from transhumants or extractive industries, so those affected can see and feel the benefit.

### 5.2.2 NATURAL RESOURCE DISPUTES BETWEEN FARMERS AND HERDERS

The dominant natural resource competition between farmers and herders relates to the land formerly reserved for grazing of livestock before herders were forcibly displaced during the events of 2012–2015 (FGs with semi-settled herders in Beya; the head of livestock in Gamboula; farmers in Toutoubou, Carnot; and Chadian transhumant herders in Yerima Badock, Carnot). Farmers know this land is highly fertile, having been fertilized by the cattle, and have taken advantage of the herders' absence to put it to agricultural production. When herders return using the traditional cattle corridors, their livestock damage the crops in these new fields.

A village chief in Beya, who is a semi-settled herder and responsible for pastoralists in this region (see Section 4.8), said he has been called upon to resolve issues arising from this situation many times in recent years (FG with seven village leaders in Beya). The head of livestock in Gamboula said this situation is “at the root of most cases of damage to crops in the Gamboula sub-prefecture and its surroundings” (Interview with the head of livestock in Gamboula).



Photo 4: Enumerator facilitating a focus group with semi-settled herders in Toutoubou, Carnot. Photo by Concordis International.

An attendee at a focus group of farmers admitted that “the area we farm used to be assigned to transhumant herders. When they left, we did not imagine they would come back, so we occupied this land” (FG with 12 farmers [six men and six women] in Toutoubou, Carnot). Members of a cooperative in Gamboula used a phrase that was heard often: “The field does not have feet; it is up to the herders to control their cattle” (FG with 12 members [five men and seven women] of a farming cooperative in Gamboula). Anecdotally, the research team heard someone retort, “But the fields must have feet; they walked into the pasturage zone.”

### 5.2.3 NATURAL RESOURCE DISPUTES BETWEEN HERDERS AND ARTISANAL MINERS

Natural resource disputes between herders (both semi-settled and transhumant) and artisanal miners mainly revolve around the disruptive impact of mining activity along transhumant corridors.

Artisanal miners in Beya explained that returning herders find that the land where they used to graze their cattle has been used for artisanal mining activities. The pits created from the digging of diamonds, known in Fulbe as *walde*, poses a danger for both herders and their herds. Some of these holes can be found along the riverbanks, and cattle have fallen into these whilst approaching the water to drink, breaking their legs (FG with 15 leaders of a female farming cooperative in Beya).

In Gamboula, transhumant herders were concerned about artisanal miners excavating around their cattle camps without negotiating access beforehand. Transhumants reported that it was not so much the mining that was the problem, it was that the miners also used the space to build homes and use the land for farming. The herders see this as an encroachment on the zones that have traditionally been reserved for them to access: “The miners believe they are the sons of the country and that foreign herders do not have the right to claim a zone dedicated exclusively to herders and their cattle... Herders nowadays face a drastic reduction in the space available to carry out their activities” (FG with 15 transhumant herders from Cameroon, in Gamboula).

The case study below illustrates the types of conflicts that occur in diamond mining areas.

#### **A Case Study from Baouma, a Village 15km from Gamboula**

The municipal authorities interviewed in Gamboula cited an incident from late January 2020.

A herder was evicted from his cattle camp by artisanal miners, who had used the land without speaking to him first. Upon finding his camp destroyed, he travelled to Dede Mokouba and visited the village chief to ask for permission to set up a new camp on the outskirts of the village. He paid 150,000 XAF (\$250) for the right to do this, as well as a two-year old cow for the mayor and the brigade commander.

Having made this arrangement, the brigade commander deemed it necessary to deploy a team to escort the herder to meet him. He charged the herder another 400,000 XAF (\$660) for this meeting, to cover the cost of fuel. The herder paid.

The herder later sought the help of the mayor and brigade commander in Gamboula, where he was previously settled, to investigate the extortion. These authorities travelled to Dede Mokouba and found that the herder was telling the truth.

The head of livestock in Gamboula introduced the enumerators to the herder in question, who implored them to pass this information onto the authorities in Bangui.

The herder viewed this as a classic example of the difficulties herders face. The enumerators found a culture amongst herders of not to divulge too much information about their grievances, for fear of reprisal attacks or being targeted for further extortion.

## 5.2.4 NATURAL RESOURCE DISPUTES BETWEEN ARTISANAL MINERS AND FARMERS

Disputes between artisanal miners and farmers over access to land were not frequently reported, though several groups spoke of the negotiations when artisanal miners find a *filon*<sup>7</sup> or line of deposits of gold or diamond on the land owned by a farmer and being used for farming (FGs with members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola, artisanal miners in Beya, farmers in Sosso-Nakombo, and artisanal miners in Nassolé).

“If the owner of the drilling hole is a native of the region, the problem is usually settled amicably, but if the owner of the hole happens to be someone who is not region, the problem becomes more complicated and it will take the intervention of the mining brigade to decide between them.”

– 12 members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola

Usually, the artisanal miner or the *chef de chantier* (owner of mining site) offers the farmer compensation for the portion of farmland destroyed. If there are several holes dug in the field, the owner becomes de facto *chef de terre* (customary land owner) and shares a percentage of the profit with the site manager.<sup>8</sup>

Alternatively, if the predicted profitability of the field is high, the site manager might ask the farmer to sell the whole plot. All those who spoke about this issue agreed that the negotiation only becomes a dispute, usually requiring mediation when the farmer refuses; otherwise, if the farmer is happy with the terms offered and there are no conflicts of interest in the arrangement, this can be a mutually beneficial collaboration (FG with 12 artisanal miners in Beya).

## 5.2.5 NATURAL RESOURCE DISPUTES WITH CHINESE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY

Many artisanal miners and farmers reported very negative perceptions of the mining industries that operate in the region, particularly those owned by Chinese-owned companies that also import labor.

Members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola said the arrival of these “powerful” companies has exacerbated an already challenging situation in Mambéré-Kadéi.<sup>9</sup> They argue that mining sites, on which they have worked for generations, are being occupied or taken over by these industries. They feel disenfranchised because “they offer us no alternative solution” (FG with 12 members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola).

“The cooperative is struggling to survive, partly due to the arrival of powerful Chinese companies to the area”

– Members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola.

“This is a latent conflict”

– Farmers in Sosso-Nakombo

“The Chinese say that the authorities are in their pockets.”

– 12 local authorities in Sosso-Nakombo

Local people sometimes dig around used-up sites, trying their luck to see if they can find some leftover carats... if they do so, the military forces shoot them at point-blank range.”

– 12 local authorities in Sosso-Nakombo

The local perception is that the Central African government signed a contract with these businesses, giving them mining rights in exchange for payment. The state then deploys the mining brigade to the

<sup>7</sup> Term used extensively in local vernacular to mean a “thread” of diamond and gold gravel

<sup>8</sup> FGs with members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola, artisanal miners in Beya, farmers in Sosso-Nakombo, and artisanal miners in Nassolé)

<sup>9</sup> Members of this mining cooperative in Nola, 12 men, alluded to the lack of pre-financing from financiers and “*collecteurs de diamant et or*” since the 2012–2015 crisis. They explained that mining cooperatives need funding ranging from 500,000 to 1 million XAF, to pre-finance field activities; artisanal miners hire laborers on the sites that they support with this money.

sites to oversee the works, enforcing the national mining code. The authorities in Nola argue that the mining brigade fails to comply with this code of conduct and, in fact, carries out punishment shootings and even killings when local people break the rules. One participant said his child was shot in the left foot on one of the sites, becoming disabled as a result, without compensation from the municipal authorities. The participants also recalled a similar incident from December 2019 on a different site in Salo (FG with 12 local authorities in Sosso-Nakombo).

In Sosso-Nakombo, people believe the presence of these mining industries has stunted local economic growth and made it impossible to earn a livelihood (ibid.). The local authorities urged the government to review its contract with these companies to prevent food shortages and youth unemployment. They were worried that this is increasing marginalization among young people, making them feel rejected by the state and more susceptible to recruitment into armed groups to make their living and as well as a kind of rebellion against the state. They recalled the incident of three Chinese miners being killed in their community and cited this as a result of these tensions. One group of farmers in Sosso-Nakombo described how their fields had been “destroyed by the Chinese.”

“The Chinese legally occupy farmland as well as inheritance plots for mining. Villages become poor after the Chinese have come and exploited there...it is very difficult, even impossible, for artisanal miner to find any gold once the mining companies have been there, due to their large-scale, industrial methods.”

#### **The Death of a Local Youth Leader and the Reprisal Attacks on three Chinese Miners (Sosso-Nakombo, October 2018)**

The local authorities reported that the incident happened when a mining site manager saw his site had been occupied by Chinese workers and raised the issue with the local authorities. When they were unable to find a viable solution, the community youth leader in Sosso-Nakombo, a highly regarded and respected member of the community, offered to mediate the conflict himself. The Chinese miners traveled with the youth leader by canoe across the Kadei River to the site. Allegedly, the canoe capsized and, as the youth leader could not swim, he drowned. His disappearance sparked an act of revenge against the Chinese miners, since it was thought they had deliberately drowned the young man. The men were brutally murdered, and local people also set fire to gendarmerie vehicles in protest.

*Note: This narrative is sensitive and contested, but this is the way it was reported by the local authorities and it is widely retold.*

### **5.3 RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS**

Inter-religious tension was not frequently talked about directly, but several groups perceived certain incidents to be manifestations of religious tensions and/or divisions between Muslim and Christian communities (FGs with 12 gold and diamond collectors in Nola; six semi-settled returnee herders (Ouda) in Sosso-Nakombo; 15 semi-settled Djafoun, Hontorbe, and Ouda herders, including head of livestock in Gamboula; and 12 members of an artisanal mining cooperative in Nola). As one respondent noted, “Before the [2012–2015] crisis, Muslims and Christians coexisted very well, compared to the current times” (FG with members [six men and six women] of a youth platform in Berberati).

Others used religious nomenclature to describe those most responsible for conflicts. A Central African diamond and gold collector reported that “Muslim collectors are currently unwilling to finance Christian Central African miners due to a climate of mistrust with its roots in past experiences...they prefer to finance their Muslim brothers” (FG with 12 gold and diamond collectors in Tanga neighborhood, Nola). Semi-settled Muslim Peulh herders in Sosso-Nakombo said, “There is a certain religious tension between Christian and Muslim people in the area... if shepherds go to bars occupied by Christian Central Africans, they get beaten up” (FG with six semi-settled returnee Ouda herders in Sosso-Nakombo). Semi-settled returnee herders in Gamboula spoke about the occupation of their properties

and shops “by Christians” (FG with 15 semi-settled Ouda herders, including the head of livestock, in Gamboula). Farmers in Carnot said that when young people struggle to find employment, “They adopt behavior which creates inter-community division, such as hate speech and religious intolerance” (FG with 12 farmers [six men and six women] in Toutoubou, Carnot).

The research team observed religious language and labeling being used in this way in this sub-region more freely than in the northwest of the country, making this a conflict dynamic that should not be overlooked, even if it’s dismissed in some circles. Seleka groups targeted Christian communities and, in reprisal, anti-Balaka groups violently drove Muslim communities out, communities out, looted their property, and burned or occupied their homes.. Much of the language used by both sides at the time had to do with redressing perceived injustices or inequalities that each group was believed to have inflicted on the other. Returnees are, in some cases, required to pay money by way of restitution for perceived crimes of other Muslims. Whether or not religion is a cause of the conflict, religious nomenclature is used to describe those who are and are not welcome and this should not be dismissed.

#### **5.4 THE CHALLENGES OF CONSERVATION AROUND DZANGHA-SANGHA NATIONAL PARK, SANGHA-MBAÉRE**

FGs with forest rangers and other conservation workers involved in the protection of Dzanga-Sangha National Park, in the far southwest of CAR, revealed details of tension between people living in the villages surrounding the protected areas (Babongo, Yandoube, Bayanga, Motokobilo, and Nguengeli, among others) and those responsible for managing its protection.

Cartographers responsible for monitoring forest management<sup>10</sup> reported that the demarcated zones forbidding farming stretch 500 meters on each side of the park (FG with seven *cartographes* in Bayanga). Farmers have started to farm this land, citing mounting pressure for land. When the wild animals roam out of the park, they trample on farmers’ crops. The cartographers explained that the association responsible for protecting the Dzanga Sangha Protected Area (APDS) has not paid compensation to farmers settled in the buffer zone. They fear that if the compensation is not paid, farmers will resort to illegal poaching to “deal” with the animals that are damaging their crops. Many of these animals are endangered and protected species. Artisanal miners are reported to mine in the protected zones, which poses a threat to the environment, as miners cut down trees and dig holes that pose a danger to wild animals.

As conservation workers attempt to protect the park, people have started to resent them for limiting their livelihood activities. The forest rangers consulted said that people perceive the shortage of food to be directly caused by the forest conservation programs. These tensions have manifested in people in the market refusing to sell food the families of rangers (FG with eight *eco gardes* in Bayanga).

The forest rangers recommended that indigenous people, who are affected by the demarcation of protected areas, be better integrated into decision-making bodies regarding these demarcations (*ibid.*). They would like to see higher and more effective levels of communication among stakeholders, as well as better education and awareness raising on the purpose and benefits of conservation. Conservation workers are fearful that if something is not done, these populations will turn against them and face a potentially violent backlash (*ibid.*).

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<sup>10</sup> The *cartographes* in the FG described their responsibilities as the mapping of poaching, farming, and diamond and gold mining areas within and around Dzanga-Sangha National Park.

## 6.0 ASSESSING CONFIDENCE IN MECHANISMS TO PROVIDE SECURITY AND MANAGE CONFLICT

The research team sought to understand which actors are trusted by the different groups to provide for their security and manage different types of conflict. When the official structures are either not trusted or not used by some groups, the team sought to understand why this is and identify recommendations to improve the social contract between citizen and state. Distinctions were drawn among those responsible for security, those trusted to resolve essentially civil disputes between citizens, and those charged with prosecuting criminality.

### 6.1 WHO RESPONDENTS TRUST TO KEEP THEM SAFE

The research found:

- For all respondents, the gendarme (34 percent), FACA (33 percent), and the police (19 percent) are the most trusted actors to ensure people's safety, followed by MINUSCA at 9 percent. Nine people (<2 percent) trust self-defense groups and two people trust 3R.
- The most frequent reasons why respondents trust their preferred actor were because they do not commit crimes (29 percent), they are trusted and neutral (26 percent), or they defend respondent's interests as an individual (25 percent). Defending the interests of their community (14 percent), having the same religion (5 percent), or having the same ethnicity (<1 percent) were the less frequently reported factors.
- Herders protect their livestock by staying close to the towns and villages (39 percent) or by putting themselves in God's hands (32 percent). A significant minority feel safer when they stay away from the villages (17 percent). Only two herders trust 3R for protection and one relies on their own weapons.
- More artisanal miners in Sosso-Nakombo put their trust in self-defense groups, in their own weapons, or in God's protection than in the gendarmes.

Confidence in armed groups or in people's own weapons is higher where the state is less present, including in remote artisanal mines and in pasturage far from towns and villages. Respondents said it is expensive to call out the gendarme, who require money for fuel (FG with two Baen [sub-group of Djafoun] transhumant herders from Cameroon). The most visible forms of state presence in remote areas are the checkpoints and the mining brigade. Confidence in state-established forms of security is undermined by the perception of being ill-disciplined, charging of illegal taxation, failure to enforce the mining code, or punishment shootings inflicted on minors. This leads to a higher probability that people will take the law into their own hands or turn to armed groups.

### 6.2 WHO RESPONDENTS TRUST TO MANAGE DIFFERENT CONFLICTS

Respondents were asked to consider real conflict scenarios or grievances, then reflect on who they would turn to in order to help them manage or resolve the dispute. They were asked who they have gone to in the past, who they would prefer to use if this incident happened in the future.

## 6.2.1 NATURAL RESOURCE CONFLICT

- The research team found 98 people who were experiencing current or recent conflict.
  - Seventy-four percent have not found a peaceful or satisfactory solution.
  - The main reasons for not resolving the conflict were refusal of the other party to cooperate (52 percent) and a lack of conflict resolution mechanism (38 percent).
  - Nineteen percent of artisanal miners inform a self-defense group when they face opposition to their mining. Six percent farmers contact a self-defense group when faced with destruction of crops by livestock.
  - Where a peaceful solution was found, a traditional leader (village chief or *ardo*) was the most frequently used mediator (53 percent), or it was resolved by the parties in person (27 percent).
  - The most common solution agreed upon was payment in cash or, occasionally, in kind.
- For future natural resource conflicts, the most common reason given for choosing a certain mediator is that the remedy is available quickly (30 percent), they are accepted by all parties (29 percent) and they are fair (29 percent). The price was also an important factor for some respondents (10 percent).
- Respondents cited a variety of mediators for natural resource conflicts:
  - **Traditional Leaders:** 61 percent of all respondents (across all groups and sub-prefectures) favor traditional leaders (village chief or *ardo*) as mediators, with herders favoring the *ardo*.
  - **Local Authorities:** Confidence in the local authority is higher in Carnot (74 percent), Bayanga (72 percent), and Berberati (66 percent) than Nola (53 percent), Gamboula (55 percent) and Sosso-Nakombo (55 percent).
  - **Site Manager:** 33 percent of miners would prefer to go to site manager.
  - **Gendarme:** 27 percent of miners, 8 percent of farmers, and 2 percent of herders prefer to go to the gendarme.
  - **Village Leader:** 18 percent of miners would prefer village leader.
  - **The Mayor:** The mayor was favored for 10 percent of farmers, 17 percent of miners, and 22 percent of herders. Mayors were more popular as mediators in Sosso-Nakombo (20 percent), Bayanga and Gamboula (both 16 percent), and less popular in Nola (13 percent), Berberati (12 percent) and Carnot (8 percent).
  - **Religious Leader:** A religious leader was favored by 7 percent of herders and 1 farmer, all in Gamboula or Sosso-Nakombo.
  - **No Outside Mediator:** 9 percent of miners would prefer negotiate themselves.

Conflicts between farmers and miners are usually settled amicably, though one miner in Nassolé described how the settlement in his community did not satisfy farmers:

The Mayor consulted with the local authorities and agreed that, when a gold or diamond “filon” enters a farmer’s field, the farmer becomes de facto “chief of land” and enjoys the same privilege as the site manager, except that this privilege only concerns the portion of his field that was destroyed; he has no rights over the rest of the site. Most farmers opposed this solution and refused to collaborate, causing many problems between [miners and farmers] despite the fact that we live together and miners buy their food from farmers (FG with 10 artisanal miners in Nassolé).

## 6.2.2 CROP DAMAGE BY LIVESTOCK

Herders (FGs with four Djafoun and Aku semi-settled returnee herders in Beya; two Baen transhumant herders from Cameroon; and 12 Degueredji semi-settled returnee herders in Sol,a, and farmers (FG with 12 members of a farming cooperative [eight women and four men] prefer a local and amicable mechanism to resolve disputes. These are quicker, fairer, and satisfy the interests of both parties (FG with four Djafoun and Aku semi-settled returnee herders in Beya). Each group accuses the other of being too quick to involve the gendarme or the authorities. Paying the costs of compensation to aggrieved parties is expensive, with these expenses being added to the cost of damages for the party found to be liable, and the authorities are accused of sometimes keeping the compensation for themselves.

When an intermediary is needed, respondents request availability of neutral actors who will be acceptable to and trusted by all sides and can assess damage quickly, without corruption or undue expense. Herders in particular recommend training in good practice and impartiality for village leaders (ibid.). Herders tend to think village chiefs are biased in favor of farmers, awarding excessive damages for destroyed crops (FG with eight male Hanagamba transhumant herders from Chad; FG with 10 Djafoun transhumant herders from Cameroon in Dourgo; only 10 percent will chose to use them. There were regional exceptions to this: female herders in Carnot consider the village leaders there as being effective in restoring social cohesion following a dispute (FG with four female Djafoun herders in Degbemaina, Carnot). Herders would ideally use the *ardo*, and most would prefer the municipal authorities or the gendarme over the village chief. Seventy-eight percent of farmers prefer the village chief, and many farmers believe the municipal authorities to be corrupt in favor of the herders (FG with 12 farmers in Boudalé, Carnot). There were also anecdotal accounts of authorities charging huge sums to mediate.

“Recently I has a conflict with a young herder whose cattle ate my manioc; I confronted him, but he responded badly...I spoke with his mother, after which he paid me 5,000 XAF (\$8) in damages. Generally, if a dispute cannot be resolved amicably, the gendarmes are called, but the gendarmerie is 20km away in Salo.”

—Leaders of a female farming cooperative in Beya

“My cattle destroyed someone’s crops, so I compensated the farmer 10,000 XAF (\$16). The damage was worth less, maybe about 5,000 XAF. However, I was happy to pay more because the community protected me during the crisis.”

—A semi-settled herder and youth leader in Beya

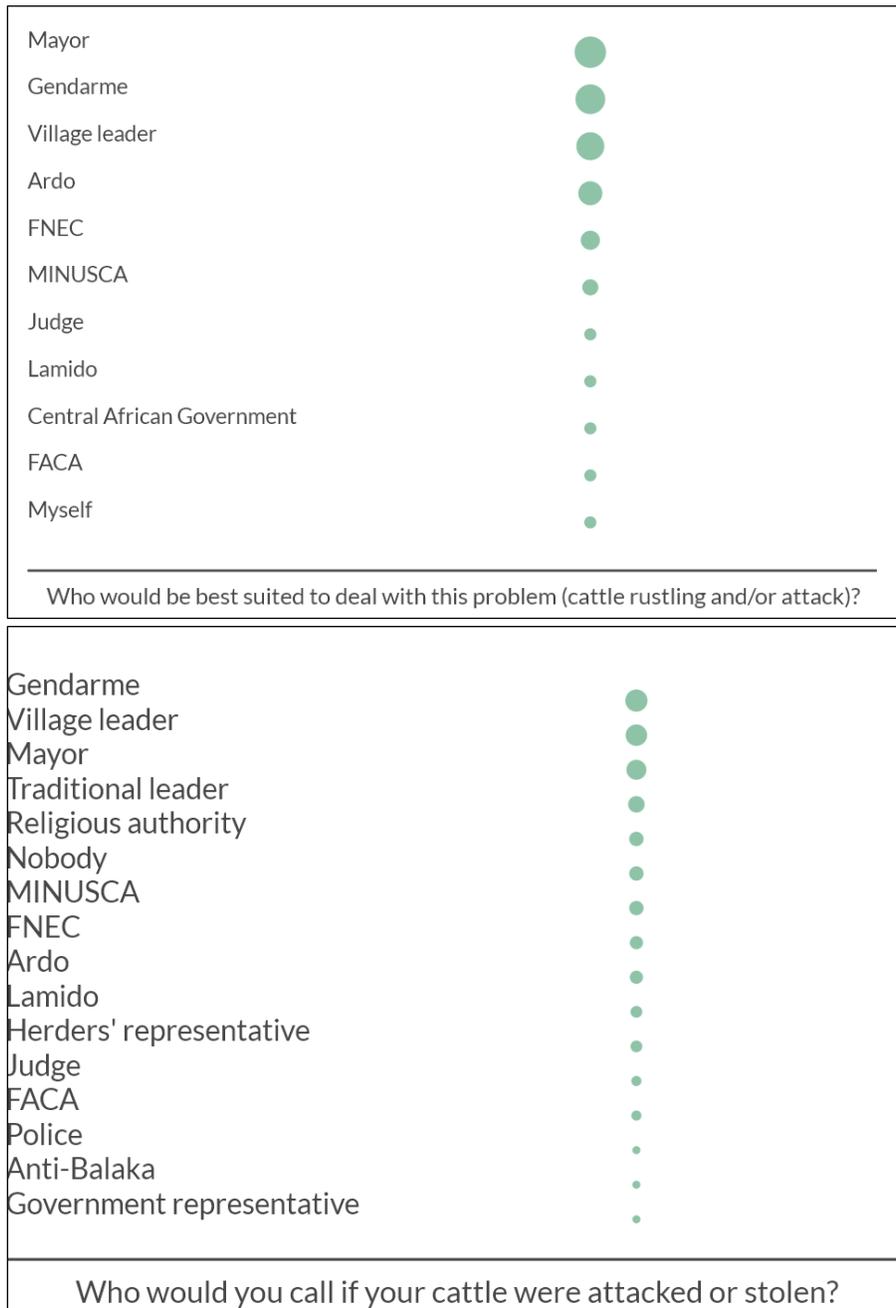
## 6.2.3 WHO RESPONDENTS TRUST TO RESOLVE CONFLICT OVER CATTLE RUSTLING

An important finding (as illustrated in Figure 4, next page) is that there is no single person or institution that all herders call upon when their cattle are stolen, even though this is a common occurrence. About 33 percent would call a traditional leader, either the village leader, *ardo*, or Senior traditional leader of herders (*Lamido*). Some call the state authorities including the gendarme (17 percent) or the mayor (14 percent), with others calling a range of actors including the UN peacekeepers, a judge, the army, the police, a government representative, or an armed group.

When asked for the ideal person or institution to deal with cattle rustling then again, there is a wide range of responses. Traditional leaders are still preferred by 33 percent of herders. State authorities are nevertheless viewed as responsible, with the mayor (23 percent) or gendarme (21 percent) being accepted. Armed groups drop off the list.

Enumerators then asked whether herders would also notify the 3R in response a cattle theft. Most had already said they do not support any armed group, but 95 percent herders would inform 3R, were their cattle stolen.

**Figure 4: How the Herders Surveyed Would Respond to a Case of Cattle Theft and/or Attack**



## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PERSPECTIVES OF LOCAL ACTORS

Respondents identified a number of recommendations intended to increase the ability of the state to deliver functions currently being delivered by armed groups, particularly in remote areas. They made further recommendations that will, if implemented, promote peaceful collaboration and sustainable livelihoods, to the mutual benefit of all groups.

### 7.1 CLEAR AND MUTUALLY AGREED-UPON DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

The key to success is to have a process that is quick, locally owned, mutually acceptable, and fair. The criteria for selection of a person or institution to resolve conflict is impartiality and honesty. A local mediator will reduce cost and delays. The choice of arbiter should be by the local communities, although most prefer the traditional authorities, the village chiefs, or the *ardo*. Different towns have different mechanisms and their success or otherwise depends more on the personalities involved than on their stations or roles. In one town, a functionary might be highly effective and well-regarded, in another town, someone with the same status might be seen as partial, corrupt, or lazy.

#### 7.1.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE CAR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Respondents recommended creating and widely disseminating clear guidance on local dispute resolution processes, including:

- An agreed tariff of damages awardable in case of damage to crops, livestock, or other property.
- A schedule of fees chargeable by the authorities for arbitrating disputes.
- The appropriate authority responsible for dealing with different criminal and civil grievances, including theft of cattle, damage to crops, injury or death following an altercation, sexual violence, criminal damage by arson, and theft, among others.
- A method to report corruption and other abuses of power, whether from the local authorities, at checkpoints, or by the mining brigade.

Instituting the above recommendations will avoid allegations of bias or corruption, increase confidence in state institutions, and reward discipline in the security services. This in turn will encourage respondents to use conflict management mechanisms instead of either running away or taking unilateral action.

#### 7.1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Training in mediation and arbitration techniques for traditional and state authorities, including on the importance of neutrality, to help them resolve disputes impartially. This will build confidence in the authorities, which will, in turn, improve current low rates of use.
- Training for women as mediators and arbiters to ensure a gender-sensitive approach to peacebuilding and justice.
- Support for young people in gaining access to these mechanisms, demonstrating their effectiveness as an alternative to violence.

## 7.2 TRANSHUMANCE AND HERDING

One key to successful transhumance is to have a mechanism in place to announce herders' arrival in advance, giving the information about the herders, the livestock, and the timing and duration of stay.

### 7.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE CAR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Agree upon and then issue the following clear and widely disseminated guidance:

- Transhumant herders should register with the authorities at the municipality, local authority, and village level.
- Registration should include the agreement of a planned route and appointment of a named person or organization with responsibility for informing settled populations along that route. Routes can vary from historic corridors and be changed if needed along the way, provided people on the route are informed in advance.
- Settled communities should be informed about issues affecting them by their traditional leaders.
- Dispute resolution mechanisms need to be agreed in advance.
- A clear and transparent system for taxation of herders should contribute to this process and yield shared benefits for herders and for settled communities along the migration route.
- If language is likely to be a barrier, it would be necessary to arrange interpreters to enable communication between herders and settled communities over routes, timing, and compensation for damage.

This guidance will encourage herders to use agreed routes and settled communities will see tangible benefits to their presence.

### 7.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECURITY SERVICES (FACA, MINUSCA, AND GENDARMES)

- Mount patrols along the agreed route migration routes, particularly at known flashpoints and border crossings.

### 7.2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO FNEC AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

- Put in place migration conferences that negotiate the route, timing, and conflict resolution processes along cattle corridors.
- Ensure technical services are available, protected, and affordable at border crossings, particularly quarantine and veterinary services during migration season. These are valued very highly and also bring benefits to the host population, if nomadic livestock are to arrive properly vaccinated and not carrying disease.
- Promote security-marking of cattle, whether by branding or by Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chip, to establish ownership.
- Require abattoirs to face checks to ensure they are only buying cattle from people who can prove ownership. If stolen cattle have a lower value than those legally obtained, there will be a market incentive to trade rather than to steal.

## **7.4 PASTURE ZONES AND CATTLE CORRIDORS**

### **7.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO CAR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

- Set up a collaborative decision-making body to determine the future status of the designated pasturage zones, recognizing its sensitivity and the vested interests involved.
- Issue bold and clear decisions about the future status of the designated pasturage zones and cattle corridors, since the current confusion causes conflict. This may include removal of structures that block the cattle corridors.

### **7.4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO LOCAL AND TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES**

- Swiftly resolve outstanding cases of returnees' houses being occupied by others.

## **7.5 SUPPORTING LIVELIHOODS**

Herding provides many opportunities to inject money into both the local and national economies, as long as these commercial transactions can take place safely. Where commercial interactions among herders, farmers, and artisanal miners are flourishing, intercommunity relations are measurably improved. This can be seen to build both resilience to conflict (through economic interdependence) and resilience to shocks (through the diversification of livelihoods).

There are opportunities for trade in goods beyond food to include metal, leather, veterinary, and electronic items, along with provision of services including moto-taxis, cooked food, and lodging. Many women have already diversified, and they request training and support to promote this; the wife of a farmer doesn't necessarily identify as a farmer, she may be a miner or a trader. Household diversification should be encouraged, since it builds resilience if one business fails.

### **7.5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND DONORS**

- Provide training and support in the diversification and improved sustainability of livelihoods. This might include support with fisheries or training in veterinary services.
- Investments should include infrastructure that improve access to markets, such as mobile phone coverage and improved public transportation.

## **7.6 DZANGA-SANGHA NATIONAL PARK**

### **7.6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO LOCAL AND TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES**

- Promote a more collaborative process to park management, involving the wider population in decisions about expansion or restriction of areas where they can practice their livelihoods.
- Utilize lessons learned from other national parks in CAR facing similar issues.
- Put in place measures to compensate farmers whose crops are destroyed by wild animals and protected species, so that local peoples do not hunt surrounding wildlife.

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